SEVERAL SERMONS

UPON

The most IMPORTANT SUBJECTS

OF

PRACTICAL RELIGION.

By the Late Reverend, and Learned Mr. HUGH BINNING, Minister of the Gospel at Govan.

Carefully copied and revised from his own manuscript, never before printed.

To which is subjoined,

An ESSAY upon

CHRISTIAN LOVE:

Wherein the NATURE, PROPERTIES, EXCELLENCY, and blessed FRUITS of this CHRISTIAN GRACE, are distinctly explained, and the constant EXERCISE of it enforced, from the most powerful MOTIVES. With a PARAPHRASE upon the Thirteenth Chapter of the First Epistle to the *CORINTHIANS*.

To which is prefixed, some Account of the LIFE and WRITINGS of the *AUTHOR*.

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The Publiſher to the READER.

THERE are no ſermons I know of any *Divine* or *Paſtor* in this kingdom, that have been more frequently printed, or more univerſally read and eſteemed than the elegant and judicious diſcourſes of Mr. *Binning*, which were publiſhed after his death, at different times in four ſmall volumes. As there was a great demand for theſe valuable writings, about twenty ſix years ago; ſo theſe printed copies of them were compared with his own manuſcript copy now in my hand, carefully reviſed, and then printed, in a large 4to of 641 pages by *Robert Fleming* Printer at *Edinburgh*, in the year 1735. to which was prefixed a ſhort account of his Life, chiefly taken from the large Memoirs of his Life that the Reverend Mr. *Robert M'Ward* ſometime Miniſter of the goſpel at *Glaſgow* wrote, in a long letter to the Reverend Mr. *James Coleman* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Sluys* in *Flanders*, who tranſlated Mr. *Binning's* Sermons into *High-Dutch*, and printed them, for the benefit of the Chriſtian congregations in *Holland* and *Flanders*. Some of the moſt memorable particulars of this great man's Life have been alſo publiſhed anno 1753. by the reverend, learned and induſtrious Mr. *John Weſley*, late *Fellow of Lincoln College Oxford*, in his Chriſtian Library, which contains about fifty volumes in 8vo, of *Extracts from, and Abridgements of the choiceſt pieces of practical Divinity*, we have printed in our language. It is prefixed to Mr. *Binning's* ſermons upon the firſt, and part of the ſecond chapters of the firſt Epiſtle of *John* in the 29th volume of that uſeful work. It is but a few things concerning Mr. *Binning's* life, character and writings theſe writers have favoured the world with; and therefore I intend, God willing, to give all that Mr. *M'Ward* and ſome others have written concerning Mr. *Binning's Life* and writings, and prefix it to the diſcourſes I am now tranſcribing, reviſing and preparing for the preſs, which will be printed as ſoon as poſſible, if I meet

with the ſame encouragement I have had, to publiſh this ſmall volume of his Sermons.

As the forementioned correct edition of his Sermons, with the ſhort account of his Life, is but in few hands, ſo I humbly preſume, at the deſire of ſome friends, to introduce the following Sermons, by a brief narrative of the moſt remarkable circumſtances of the Life of this pious and learned gentleman, and give a more full and diſtinct account of his Sermons and Lectures I have by me, than what hath yet been printed, agreeable to Mr. *M'Ward's* large letter to Mr. *Coleman* now before me.

Mr. *Hugh Binning* was born in the Shire of *Air*, in the year 1627. as appears by an inſcription beſide his Tomb in *Govan Church-yard*. He was the eldeſt ſon of Mr. *John Binning* of *Dalvennan* a Gentleman of a good eſtate in that country; his *Mother Margaret M'Kelt* was a daughter of the Reverend Mr. *Matthew M'Kell* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Bothwell*. The good effects of the liberal education his Father gave him, were early diſcovered by his friends and acquaintance; for when he was at the *Grammar-ſchool*, he made ſo great proficiency in the knowledge of the *Latin-tongue*, that he outſtripped ſuch as were ſome years elder than himſelf. He was eminently pious from his childhood, for when his fellow-ſchool boys went to their play after their fixed hours of reading, he declined their ſociety, and rather choſe to ſpend his time in prayer, meditation, and other religious exerciſes, or in conference with ſome pious perſons. "He began early "to have ſweet familiarity with God, (ſaith his friend "Mr. *M'Ward*) and to live in the moſt intimate fellow-"ſhip, and communion with the Father and his Son Jeſus "Chriſt; before others began ſeriouſly to mind religion, "or lay to heart their loſt condition by nature, or the "miſery they are involved in by walking in a wicked "way. When he arrived at the 13th or 14th year of his "age, he had even then attained ſo much Chriſtian "gravity, and compoſure of ſpirit, ſo much delight in "Chriſtian exerciſes, and ſo much experience in the ways "of God, that the moſt judicious Chriſtians in the place "who

" who frequently did meet for prayer, conference, and " mutual edification, not only admitted him as a mem- " ber of their ſociety, but with great admiration beheld " the grace of God in him; and often acknowledged " how much they were edified, inſtructed, comforted, " and ſtrengthned by this pious youth: nay, that he pro- " voked them to more diligence and fervour, and fre- " quency in the duties of religion, when they found " themſelves outdone and outrun by a child of thirteen " years."

He entered upon the ſtudy of *Philoſophy* in the *Univerſity* of *Glaſgow* Anno 1641. wherein he made great progreſs, and with as much facility outſtripped his fellow-ſtudents, as he had done thoſe in the *Latin-ſchool;* and was much noticed and reſpected both by the *Profeſſors* and *Students*. And as he made great proficiency in all the liberal Sciences, he alſo advanced remarkably in religion and virtue; the abſtruſe depth of *Philoſophy*, which is the torture of weak minds, and ſhallow capacities, he dived unto without any trouble. He had a quick and ready apprehenſion of all things, whereby he was able to do more in one hour, by hard ſtudy and labour, than other people in ſome days; but notwithſtanding all his wonderful attainments and improvements, that procured him the higheſt reſpect from the *Maſters* of the *College*, and the *Miniſters* of the *Town;* yet he was extremely modeſt and humble, never exalted above meaſure, nor ſwelled with pride, or ſelf conceit, the common diſtemper and infirmity of young men, of any greatneſs of ſpirit.

So ſoon as he had finiſhed his courſe of *Philoſophy*, he was made *Maſter of Arts* with great applauſe, and being furniſhed with an uncommon meaſure of uſeful knowledge, he began to ſtudy *Divinity* when he was about eighteen years of age 1645. At that time there was a vacancy in the *Univerſity* of *Glaſgow* by the reſignation of the honourable *James Dalrymple* Eſq; afterwards *Viſcount of Stair*, who had been his Maſter when he ſtudied Philoſophy. Mr. *Binning*, after much entreaty, determined to ſtand as a Candidate for that Office, and the *Miniſters*

of *Glaſgow*, being both well acquainted with his piety, literature, and ſound judgment, prevailed with him to diſpute with ſome other learned men for that profeſſion; for the Maſters of that College had invited ſome from all the Univerſities in this kingdom to diſpute for that *Profeſſorſhip*, and aſſured them, that the Place or Office, ſhould be conferred upon the worthieſt and moſt learned, without partiality, or reſpect of perſons. Two other candidates appeared, who had great intereſt with the learned Dr. *John Strang Principal* of the *College* at that time; but Mr. *Binning* ſo managed the diſpute, and acquitted himſelf ſo well in all the parts of the Trial, that he was juſtly preferred, and elected one of their *Regents* and Profeſſors of *Philoſophy*: And though he had not time after his election, to prepare any regular Syſtem of any part of the Philoſophy he taught, before he met with the Students; yet ſuch was the quickneſs and fertility of his invention, the tenaciouſneſs of his memory, and the ſolidity of his judgment, that his Dictates to his Scholars had a depth of Learning, and perſpicuity of expreſſion, far above any thing that was taught at that time: And I am well aſſured that he was among the firſt in *Scotland*, that began to reform the *Philoſophy* taught in the *Univerſities*, from the barbarous terms, and unintelligible diſtinctions of the *Schoolmen*, and the many vain diſputes which rather perplexed the minds of the Youth, than furniſhed them with ſolid and uſeful Knowledge.

He continued in this important Profeſſion for three years, and taught all the branches of natural and moral *Philoſophy* ſo well, that he gained the higheſt applauſe of the *Univerſity* for his *Academical* exerciſes; and this was the more wonderful, that he carried on his *Theological* ſtudies and exerciſes, at the ſame time, and made vaſt improvements, both in Practical and *Polemical Divinity*; for he was determined to ſerve his God in the holy Miniſtry, when he was regularly called thereunto: His penetration was ſo deep and extenſive, and his memory ſo retentive and ſtrong, that he ſcarce forgot any uſeful thing he had either read or heard; he could eaſily tranſcribe any

any Sermon he heard, after he returned to his chamber, at ſuch full length, as that the intelligent reader who heard the ſame diſcourſe, ſhould ſcarce find one ſentence of it wanting; and this qualified him to be an able Teacher in the Church of Chriſt.

During this period of his Life, he gave an uncommon proof of his knowledge, by a diſcourſe which he compoſed upon 2 *Cor.* v. 14, 15. *For the love of Chriſt conſtraineth us, becauſe we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead,* &c. this he ſent to a Gentlewoman who had been detained at *Edinburgh*, for a conſiderable time. She judged it was a Sermon of ſome eminent Miniſter in the weſt country, and of one whom the city had reſolved to call to one of their churches, or the Profeſſorſhip of *Divinity*, and put it into the *Provoſt's* hands, who was ſo well pleaſed with the diſcourſe, that he was earneſt to get that Miniſter tranſported he ſuppoſed to be the author of it. But when the Lady returned back to *Glaſgow*, ſhe ſoon found her miſtake, when her friend Mr. *Binning* called for his diſcourſe from her. This was the firſt diſcovery he had given of his ſingular dexterity, and great ability in explaining the holy Scriptures.

At the expiration of the third year of his teaching *Philoſophy* in *Glaſgow*, the pariſh of *Govan* about two miles weſt from that City, became vacant; and the *Preſbytery* of *Glaſgow* having a view of ſupplying that vacancy with an able Miniſter, did take Mr. *Binning* upon Trials, and having acquitted himſelf well in every part of them, he was licenſed to preach the goſpel: And having preached ſeveral times at *Govan*, to the great ſatisfaction of that people, he was unanimouſly called to take the charge of that numerous congregation, and ordained their Paſtor by the foreſaid *Preſbytery*. Such was the high opinion of his paſtoral abilities, that the *Preſbytery* reſolved to call him to their firſt vacant church in *Glaſgow*, and the Maſters of the *Univerſity* deſigned to have him back again to their ſociety, when ever the Profeſſion of *Divinity* ſhould become vacant.

Sometime after he was ſettled in *Govan*, he married *Barbara Simſon* daughter to the Reverend Mr. *James Simſon*, a worthy Miniſter in *Ireland*. Upon the day of his marriage, he went accompanied with his friends (among whom were ſome grave and worthy Miniſters) to a neighbouring congregation in the country, at their weekly ſermon. The Miniſter of that pariſh waited till they came, expecting to get one of the Miniſters to preach for him that day, but as every one of them declined this office, he prevailed at length with Mr. *Binning* the young *Bridegroom* to preach. It was no difficult taſk for him to preach upon a ſhort warning, and having ſtept aſide to implore his gracious Maſter's preſence, he went to the Pulpit and preached upon 1 *Pet.* i. 15. *But as he who hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all manner of converſation*: All his hearers that day acknowledged (as Mr. *M'ward* tells us) "*That God was with him of a truth.* The peo-
" ple of the pariſh who came to hear their own Miniſter,
" (a truly pious and excellent man) were much ſurprized,
" and taken with Mr. *Binning*; as if God beſides his
" ordinary reſident had ſent an extraordinary *Ambaſſador*
" to negotiate a peace between God and them, and a
" prompt paranymph unto, and a ſkilful ſuiter of a ſpouſe
" for Jeſus Chriſt the bleſſed *Bridegroom*, that he might
" *preſent them as a chaſte virgin* to this divine Husband."

From his childhoood *he knew the holy ſcriptures, which made him wiſe unto ſalvation*, and *throughly furniſhed unto every good work*. He was under deep and ſpiritual exerciſe, till he entered into the ſacred Miniſtry, and then he came to a great calm, and laſting tranquillity of mind, being mercifully relieved from all theſe doubtings, and fears, which had for a long time greatly perplexed him. He was of a tender and weakly conſtitution, not being able to read much at one time, or to undergo the fatigue of aſſiduous ſtudy; but this bodily infirmity was the leſs detrimental, as he had a memory that retained almoſt every thing he read or heard, and a ſolid penetrating judgment, whereby he digeſted it well, and made it his own: So that with a ſingular dexterity he could bring it forth

forth ſeaſonably, and communicate it to the advantage of his neighbours, drained from the dregs he found round about it, or intermixed with it, inſomuch that his knowledge ſeemed rather to be born with him, than to have been acquired by hard and laborious ſtudy. Love to Chriſt, and an ardent concern for the good of precious ſouls, conſtrained him to feed the flock of God, with diligence and fidelity, and ſpend himſelf in the diſcharge of every part of his work. He was not much averſe at any time to embrace an invitation to preach, before the moſt judicious and experienced Chriſtians, even the Reverend Miniſters of *Glaſgow*, and the learned Profeſſors of the *Univerſity*. One of his moſt intimate friends (obſerving how this differed from that ſelf-denial and modeſty which appeared in the whole of his conduct) took the freedom to aſk him, how he came to be ſo eaſily prevailed with to preach before perſons of great judgment and experience, whoſe eminent gifts and graces he highly valued and eſteemed: He made this reply, "That when I have a clear call to "mention my bleſſed Maſter's name in any place, I have "no more to ſay, but *here am I, ſend me;* What am I, "that I ſhould reſiſt his heavenly call? And when he "whoſe name is holy and Reverend is ſpoken of or to, "and is there preſent, the preſence of no other perſon "is to be regarded or dreaded; and under that impreſ-"ſion I forget who is preſent, and who is abſent."

He kept ſome meetings for prayer and Chriſtian fellowſhip, with ſome young Miniſters in the ſame *Presbytery*, for their mutual improvement in piety and uſeful knowledge; they had been Students of *Divinity* when he taught *Philoſophy* in the *College*, and had contracted an intimate friendſhip with him; but finding that he was in ſome danger of being puffed up with the high opinion they had of him, he withdrew from their meetings, but ſtill kept up a friendly correſpondence with them. He was clothed with humility, and endeavoured to hide his valuable attainments under that vail: And though he never wanted either profitable matter, or acceptable words both to pleaſe and edify his hearers; yet his ſoul was filled with a holy

dread

dread when he ſpoke in publick, of God, or Chriſt, or the weighty matters of the law and goſpel, and he often ſaid, *Ah! Lord God, I am a child, and cannot ſpeak; teach me what I ſhall ſay of thee, who cannot order my ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.*

He ſtudied often the grand books of creation and Providence, and with much pleaſure did contemplate the divine glory, that was written in theſe volumes: The manifold wonders he diſcovered in both, led him to the devouteſt admiration, and love of the all-wiſe, and powerful Creator, and Preſerver of all things. When he came to viſit a worthy gentleman of good learning, and his own intimate friend; he walked for ſome time with him in his garden, and diſcourſed admirably of the declarations which every thing makes of God, and talked much of the manifold wiſdom and goodneſs of the Almighty in clothing the earth with a green garb, rather than with a garment of any other colour; and having a flower plucked, he made a moſt ſavoury, ſpiritual, and uſeful diſcourſe upon it: He ſo anatomized and diſſected the ſame, as to ſet forth the glorious perfections of God, in a moſt raviſhing and entertaining manner.

When the unhappy diſtinction betwixt the *publick Reſolutioners*, and *Proteſters* took place in this *Church*, Mr. *Binning* was of the laſt denomination. This woful diſtinction was accompanied with fatal conſequents, and particularly a dreadful ſchiſm and diviſion in the Church which laſted ſometime; he ſaw the evil of it while he lived, and being of a catholick and healing ſpirit, he endeavoured to cement the differences that alienated the hearts of Chriſtians from one another. He was a perſon of exemplary moderation and candour, had healing methods much at heart, and ſtudied to promote love and peace among his brethren in the Miniſtry; for this purpoſe he wrote an excellent treatiſe *of Chriſtian Love* which he deſigned to print. He was no fomenter of unchriſtian factions, but careful of the publick tranquillity; his principles were moderate, and his paſſions temperate: He was neither arrogant, vehement, or confident in the management of

publick

publick affairs, far from impoſing or over bearing upon others, but willingly hearkned to advice, and yielded to reaſon: He endeavoured to recover the humanity of Chriſtianity which had been loſt in a great meaſure in the animoſities and contentions of theſe diſtracted times.

After he had laboured about four years in the holy Miniſtry, he died of a conſumption, in the twenty ſixth year of his age, much lamented by all good people who knew him. He left behind him a ſweet ſavour after he was gone, and a letter of commendation upon the hearts of his hearers. He was buried in the church yard of *Govan*, where the Reverend Mr. *Patrick Gilleſpie*, then *Principal* of the *Univerſity* of *Glaſgow*, at his own charges erected a fine marble monument, with an inſcription in *Latin*, that remaineth to this day, where we have his character juſtly given in few words. He left behind him a diſconſolate widow, and his only ſon *John*, to whom the eſtate of *Dalvennan* was left by his *Grandfather* (who ſurvived his father a conſiderable time) after he died; but this young man having been engaged at the riſing at *Bothwel-bridge* 1679 was forfeited, and continued diſpoſſeſſed of his land till the year 1690, when by the 18th Act of King *William's* Parliament, the forfeitures and fines paſt ſince the year 1665, to the 5th day of Nov. 1688 were reſcinded. His widow was afterwards married to the Reverend Mr. *James Gordon*, a Presbyterian Miniſter for ſome time in *Ireland*; ſhe lived above forty years after Mr. *Binning*, and died in a good old age at *Paiſly*, about four miles from *Govan* in the year 1694; the pariſhoners of *Govan* gave her a decent funeral, laid her body in her husband's tomb, and paid all the charges of her burial: Mr. *Binning* is to this day mentioned with particular veneration in that pariſh, he was ſucceeded by the Reverend Mr. *David Veitch*, who likewiſe died very young.

" He was (ſaith his friend Mr. *M'Ward*) a prodigy " of learning conſidering his age; for before he arrived " at the 26th year of his life, he was the moſt accom- " pliſhed *Philoſopher* and *Divine* in that time, and was " juſtly

" juſtly ſtiled the Scots *Cicero*. He was a perſon of ſingular
" piety and prudence, of exemplary moderation and ſo-
" briety of ſpirit, of a very humble, meek and peaceable
" temper, an elegant lively and judicious preacher. *In all*
" *things he ſhewed himſelf a pattern of good works; in*
" *doctrine ſhewing uncorruptneſs, gravity, ſincerity, and*
" *ſound ſpeech that cannot be condemned. He was a burn-*
" *ing and a ſhining light, and many for a ſeaſon were*
" *willing to rejoice in his light*. He was too bright a light
" to ſhine long, and burned ſo intenſely, that he was
" ſoon put out; but now *ſhines as the ſun in the kingdom*
" *of his Father*, and even ſhines more conſpicuouſly *than*
" *the brightneſs of the firmament*, or *the ſtars for ever*
" *and ever*. His temper and character is beſt known by
" his writings; for his life was his ſermons put in print,
" by which means, they who did forget what he had ſaid
" in the pulpit, by ſeeing what he did in his converſation,
" might remember what they forgot: He lived as he
" ſpoke, and ſpoke as he lived. He had (ſaid the learn-
" ed and judicious Mr. *James Durham*, an excellent
" judge of men) *the tongue of the learned*, and knew
" how to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, and truly there is no
" ſpeaking upon any ſubject after Mr. *Binning*: He
" ſpoke and wrote his own experimental knowledge, and
" did both ſpeak and write becauſe he believed."

The four books which were printed at different times, with Mr. *Binning's* name, as his genuine compoſitions are all poſthumous, though they were faithfully copied from his own papers, and as he had not time to tranſcribe and reviſe them for the preſs, ſo they muſt want that finiſhed accuracy and elegance in language which ſuch a maſterly pen was able to give them; but as they were reviſed by ſome of the moſt *able Miniſters of the Goſpel* after his death: So this ſmall diſadvantage that commonly attends any poſthumous writings may be eaſily overlooked by his candid Readers.

The firſt book of diſcourſes that was printed a little time after his death, is intituled, *The common Principles of the Chriſtian Religion clearly proved, and ſingularly improved*

improved; or a practical Catechiſm, wherein ſome of the moſt concerning Foundations of our Faith are ſolidly laid down, and that Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs is ſweetly, yet pungently preſſed home, and moſt ſatisfyingly handled, in twenty four Sermons, where many texts of Scripture are judiciouſly explained. There are often two or three texts preached upon, in every diſcourſe upon the *Shorter Catechiſm*, and ſometimes four. This book, as the writers of his life obſerve, ſo far as it goes, *viz.* to the twenty firſt Queſtion, *Who is the Redeemer of God's elect?* Is one of the beſt Expoſitions we have of that part of the *Weſtminiſter* excellent *Catechiſm*; and if he had lived to finiſh this work, it would have been a complete and agreeable *Syſtem of Divinity*, not inferior to any we have printed ſince that time. The Reverend and learned Mr. *Patrick Gilleſpie Principal* of the *Univerſity* in *Glaſgow* wrote a ſhort preface, which is prefixed to it; wherein he juſtly obſerves, "That the fundamentals of the "Chriſtian religion, and the venerable myſteries of our "moſt holy faith are handled with the greateſt goſpel-"ſimplicity, and moſt dexterous plainneſs, and are brought "down to the meaneſt capacity, and vulgar underſtand-"ing, with abundant evidences of a great height and "reach of uſeful knowledge in the Author; who had he "lived to have perfected the explication of the grounds "of *Religion*, in his opening the *Catechiſm* to his own "congregation, he had been upon this ſingle account, fa-"mous in the Churches of Chriſt." Mr. *M'Ward* (in his Letter to Mr. *Coleman*, who tranſlated this valuable book into *High Dutch*) ſays, "That it contained only Mr. "*Binning's* notes upon theſe ſubjects he preached to his "flock, and which he himſelf tranſcribed for the private "uſe and edification of a friend of his own, who ſent "them to me, to reviſe for the preſs." And he adds, "Though he was frequently interrupted by buſineſs, or "diſcourſe with his friends, in writing theſe papers, yet "I did not obſerve above three or four words interlined "in the whole treatiſe; and I can aſſure you, when I "peruſed it, I was not put to the neceſſity either of al-

"tering

" tering a ſingle word, or adding or taking away any
" word, either to make the ſenſe more plain and clear
" or more full and emphatical: I was much ſurprized to
" find the diſcourſes written with ſo much accuracy and
" diſtinctneſs. I can alſo ſay the ſame thing of the other
" three books which were afterwards printed, as I did
" not find one word wanting, or redundant." This treatiſe was ſo much read and eſteemed in this country, that there were ſix impreſſions or editions of it before the year 1718, and many more ſince; and this book and the three other volumes have been often re-printed in *London*: And as all his printed works were much valued ſo they were highly prized abroad, when they were tranſlated into other languages: There is yet a great demand for this book, and we will probably ſoon ſee another edition printed from Mr. *Fleming's* correct copy, which contains above 150 pages in Quarto.

In the year 1670, there were forty Sermons of Mr. *Binning's*, printed upon the firſt ſixteen verſes of the eighth chapter of *Paul's* epiſtle to the *Romans*, intituled, *The Sinner's Sanctuary; or a diſcovery made of theſe glorious privileges offered unto the penitent and faithful under the Goſpel*, in Quarto, conſiſting of two hundred pages. I have ſeen ſome editions of this printed at *London* at different times, and ſome in Octavo printed at *Edinburgh*. The publiſhers in a ſhort preface acquaint us, " That they
" were encouraged to print theſe very valuable Sermons
" becauſe his former diſcourſes *upon the common principles of the Chriſtian Religion* were univerſally receiv-
" ed, and highly eſteemed by the intelligent and judici-
" ous, in the principles of the Chriſtian faith." They alſo juſtly obſerve, " That in this book, as in all his other
" writings, the reader will perceive a pure ſtream of lively
" piety, and the moſt uſeful knowledge running through
" the whole; and a very peculiar turn of thought, that
" exceeds the writers on this choice part of the holy
" Scriptures they have ſeen." I have a manuſcript copy of theſe excellent Sermons, in a large Folio volume, t

Mr

r. *Binning's* diſcourſes I have lately purchaſed, in an d hand both legible and correct.

A third treatiſe of this incomparable Writer, was firſt inted at *Edinburgh* in the year 1671, and often re-inted at *Glaſgow* and *London* ſince that time; the title it is, *Fellowſhip with God*, being twenty eight Sermons on the firſt chapter, and the firſt three verſes of the ſe-nd chapter of the firſt epiſtle of *John*. Wherein we have e true ground and foundation of attaining fellowſhip th the Father and with the Son, and the bleſſed condi-n of ſuch as do attain to it, moſt ſuccinctly and di-nctly explained. Theſe Sermons were reviſed and pub-hed by one *A. S.* who ſtiles himſelf a ſervant in the oſpel of our deareſt Lord and Saviour. He obſerves, at they contain the moſt excellent counſels and directi-ns, to ſerious ſeekers of fellowſhip with God, to guide m in their way, and help them forward to the attain-ent of that fulneſs of joy, which is in God's preſence, *Pſal.* xvi. 11. I have a manuſcript copy of theſe Sermons, rote in a very fair and beautiful hand, which I ſuppoſe s prepared for the preſs by Mr. *M'Ward*, with ſcores awn below words and ſentences, that were deſigned to be inted (in what is called the *Italick*) character; the ſer-ons upon the ſecond chapter ſeem to be Mr. *M'Ward's* n writ, as they reſemble exactly many writings I have his own hand. Mr. *Fleming's* correct edition of theſe rmons in the Quarto volume of his works, agrees exact-with this, and there is no difference I can perceive twixt them, except that he hath divided a long ſermon two, to make up the ſame number of ſermons that we ve in the former printed copies. The publiſher *A. S.* th omitted two diſcourſes upon the fifth and ſixth ver-of the firſt chapter, which are contained in a Quarto py of Mr. *Binning's* Sermons I have by me, which are way inferior to the printed ones, and are written in e ſame ſtile and language with his other compoſitions; rhaps he did not ſee them when he copied the reſt om his papers.

The

The laſt treatiſe which was publiſhed by the ſa
A. S. a little time after his Sermons upon the firſt epi
of *John*, is intituled, *Heart humiliation*, or eighte
Miſcellany Sermons, preached upon ſome choice texts
faſt-days, and other ſolemn occaſions, wherein he diſc
vers how much his righteous ſoul was grieved for t
groſs profaneneſs and immorality, the lamentable di
ſions, and confuſions that were in the Church at th
time.

There was a Pamphlet of fifty one pages in ſmall prin
publiſhed anno 1693, with Mr. *Binning's* name on t
Title-page, intituled, *An uſeful Caſe of Conſcien
learnedly and accurately diſcuſſed, and reſolved concer
ing Aſſociations and Confederacies with Idolaters, Infide
Hereticks, Malignants, or any other known enemies
Truth and Godlineſs*, divided into five ſections; the Pu
liſher of it tells us, that it is uſeful for theſe times, a
was printed for the benefit of all thoſe who deſire
know or retain the ſworn principles of the Church
Chriſt in Scotland. I have read this treatiſe, and ſh
only obſerve, that there is the beſt Collection of Scri
tures I know, inſerted concerning the ſin and danger
joined with wicked and ungodly men in their evil cour
or being unneceſſarily in their company, or making th
our principal friends, and companions; particularly
the laſt ſection, where he cites and explains a great numb
of paſſages in the writings of *Solomon* to that purpoſe:
is wrote in a ſmooth good ſtile, agreeable enough to
Binning's ſentiments, in ſome paſſages of his ſermo
But the publiſher of his Life, page 21 informs us, that
was queſtioned by the moſt intelligent, if it was rea
compoſed and written by Mr. *Binning*, and that K
William our great Deliverer, took an effectual meth
to ſuppreſs it, when it was ſpreading in his army
Flanders, when he was engaged in a defenſive war w
the Emperor of *Germany*, and the King of *Spain*, aga
that bloody tyrant *Louis* XIV. King of *France*, le
ſhould have had any bad influence on the ſoldiers:
my readers may eaſily judge whether the writer of

Li

Life hath given any good reaſon why this Pamphlet could not be written by Mr. *Binning*; for though Mr. *Binning* was of a very pacifick temper, and did not chooſe to print any thing that would inflame the bitter contentions at that time; yet it is well known that he diſapproved the publick *Reſolutions*, though he amicably agreed to that wiſe reſolution, that the miniſters ſhould neither preach or print upon any ſide of that queſtion, after they were in ſome meaſure united. I have ſeen nothing in that pamphlet, or any thing the writer of his Life hath ſuggeſted to convince any candid or impartial reader that the foreſaid treatiſe was not compoſed by Mr. *Binning*, at the beginning of theſe unhappy debates.

Mr. *M'ward* informs us that Mr. *Binning* had written an Examen of the learned Dr. *John Strang* Principal of the *Univerſity* in *Glaſgow*, *Dictates de voluntate Dei circa peccata*, or God's concurrence with ſinful actions, without inciting men to them, or approving them after they are committed; this would have been publiſhed if the Doctor's book had been printed at that time, but this treatiſe of Mr. *Binning's* cannot now be found, and it was probably loſt with ſome other valuable compoſitions. Dr. *Strang's* large book in Quarto upon the ſaid ſubject, and his valuable treatiſe upon *The divine Inſpiration and uſefulneſs of the Scriptures*, were printed ſome years after Mr. *Binning's* death. Mr. *Binning* wrote alſo a large courſe of *Philoſophy*, in good *Latin*, which I am told is in the hands of a learned Gentleman in the eaſt country, who gives them a high commendation.

Mr. *Binning's* elegant and judicious treatiſe of *Chriſtian Love* was firſt printed from a manuſcript in my hand, at *Edinburgh* 1743, in an Octavo pamphlet of forty ſeven pages in ſhort print by *Robert Fleming*, to which he hath prefixed a ſhort preface, wherein he juſtly obſerves, "That as Mr. *Binning* was a miniſter of a "moſt pacifick temper, ſo this moſt amiable grace did "illuſtriouſly ſhine in him: And though he wrote this "treatiſe above an hundred years ago, yet it is not in-

" ferior to any diſcourſes upon this important ſubject,
" that have been publiſhed ſince that time. This ſubject
" is treated of in a moſt ſublime elegant and pathetick
" ſtrain; he explains the nature of brotherly love very
" diſtinctly, and points out the excellent properties, the
" bleſſed effects, or fruits of it, in a raviſhing and cap-
" tivating manner; he enforceth the exerciſe of this
" divine grace, with the moſt powerful motives, and
" convincing arguments: And he ſeems to outſtrip all
" that went before him in his admirable *Commentary* on
" the thirteenth chapter of the firſt epiſtle to the *Co-*
" *rinthians*. He ſhews in ſhort, that there is a greater
" moment and weight in *Chriſtian Love*, than in thoſe
" things for which ſome Chriſtians bite and devour one
" another; that it is the diſtinguiſhing badge and cha-
" racterof every true diſciple of Chriſt, the fundamental
" law of the goſpel, to which all poſitive precepts and or-
" dinances ſhould ſtoop: And tho' unity in judgment in
" ſome things, is very deſirable, yet unity in affection
" is moſt eſſential and fundamental for the well being of
" Chriſtians. If then we caſt away (upon every different
" apprehenſion of mind) this noble badge of *Chriſtianity*,
" we diſown our *Maſter*, and diſclaim his *Livery*," John xiii. 34, 35. The reader will ſee ſome excellent paſſages of this Eſſay in the 22d and 23d pages of his Life. And the Publiſher tells us, " That he had reviſed
" about twenty four Sermons, upon very edifying and
" profitable ſubjects, to print in a ſeparate volume, from
" which they ſhould receive as great improvement, and
" ſatisfaction as from any of his printed treatiſes, which
" every perſon may eaſily diſcover from the ſtile and lan-
" guage to be *Mr. Binning's* genuine compoſitions, and
" his manner of writing can ſcarcely be imitated by any o-
" ther perſon." Theſe Sermons were carefully tranſcribed ſome little time ago, and reviſed by the aſſiſtance of a friend, and are now printed in this ſmall volume.

Before I conclude this narrative, I conceive it will be agreeable to my readers, to give ſome account of an other writings of this learned and worthy Gentleman, ha

have by me in *manuſcript* in a Folio and Quarto volume, bound up with the greateſt part of his printed works, which appear not to be any way inferior to the diſcourſes which the world have been favoured with; a good number of them are copied from his own papers, by Mr. *Robert M'Ward* his friend, with marginal notes, as an Index or contents of the heads of his diſcourſes: The Sermons written in another hand are corrected by him, with the ſame uſeful marginal Indexes; there are many lines drawn for printing the Scriptures, and ſome other things in the *Italick* character, I wiſh he had been as careful about what is called proper pointing and ſpelling. I have carefully tranſcribed the following diſcourſes, namely, two upon the Goſpel's enlightening men with uſeful knowledge, *Acts* xxvi. 18. Three upon *Paul's* cure of the lame man at *Lyſtra*, and the effect it had upon the people, *Acts* xiv. 11, 12, *&c.* Three upon *glorying in Chriſt's croſs*, Gal. vi. 14. Seven upon *Phil.* iv. 6, 7. wherein the *carefulneſs* we ſhould avoid, the nature and qualifications of *Prayer*, and the *Peace of God*, which ſhould keep our hearts are explained; one Sermon upon *Afflictions*, *Micah* vi. 9. Preparation for them, *Amos* iv. 12. One upon the incomparable worth of *the Soul*, *Matth.* xvi. 26. One upon the nature of *God's Kingdom*, *Rom.* xiv. 17. Two upon *heart purity*, *Jer.* iv. 14. Two long Sermons upon the *new Heavens* and *new Earth*, 2 *Pet.* iii. 13. Two upon *Diligence*, *Heb.* vi. 11, 12. Two upon *ſpiritual Inſtruction*, *Jer.* vi. 8. One upon *Ephraim's Repentance*, *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19, 20. Two upon the the *Conſideration of our Latter-end*, *Deut.* xxxii. 28, 29. Three upon the nature and cauſe of our *Deſtruction*, Hoſ. xiii. 9. Beſides which, I have alſo in theſe volumes ſix Sermons upon *Iſa*, xxxii. 1, 2. *Behold a King ſhall reign in righteouſneſs*, Four upon the parable of the *marriage ſupper for the King's Son*, *Matth.* xxii. 11----15. Nine upon the cauſe and cure of *Impenitence*, *Jer.* viii. 4-----10. Three upon *Apoſtacy*, and the cauſes of *forſaking Chriſt*, *John* vi. 66, 67. Four upon *Godlineſs* and *Contentment*, 1 *Tim.*

iv. 8. *Chap.* vi. 6. Four upon *Jer.* ii. 31, 32. *O generation, ſee the word of the Lord; have I been a wilderneſs unto Iſrael, or a land of darkneſs?* Seven upon the ſupport of the ſaints under their *tribulations*, 2 *Cor.* iv. 16, *&c. For this cauſe we faint not.* Theſe few Lectures of *Mr. Binning's* are alſo preſerved, namely, *Lectures or Expoſitions upon ſome Pſalms, viz.* The third, fourth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, ſixteenth, ſeventeenth, the firſt nine or ten verſes of the eighteenth, fifty firſt, eighty eighth, the hundred and thirty, and *Pſalm* cxix. verſes 49 --55. And there is ſubjoined to theſe, ſix or ſeven diſcourſes upon 1 *Pet.* i. 13----18, and a diſcourſe upon the duties of miniſters and elders, and the obedience due unto paſtors, Heb. xiii. 17. In thoſe volumes there are fair copies of his ſermons, upon the eight Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*; upon the Shorter *Catechiſm*, and the firſt Epiſtle of *John*, to which is added a Sermon or two on 1 *John* i. 5, 6, not yet printed, and the greateſt part of his printed treatiſes, which were found more correct than ſome printed editions of his valuable diſcourſes. Theſe three volumes were many years concealed in the Library of *John Graham*, a pious and learned man, much abſtracted from the world, who was a near relation of Mr *M'ward's*, with a large Collection of Mr. *M'Ward's* own papers, which are yet among the curious and large Collection of manuſcripts, that were left by Mr. *Wodrow* the Author of the Hiſtory of the ſufferings of this Church, to his ſons.

Some wonder why none of theſe ſeventy eight Sermons, or theſe in the following Collection were not printed formerly; to this I can eaſily reply, that they were not ſeen perhaps for ſeventy or eighty years, Mr. *Graham* Mr. *M'Ward's* heir and relation, ſeldom converſed with any perſon whatſoever, and none of his friends and acquaintance ever knew what papers or manuſcripts he had ſhut up from the world, and who knows but ſome other writings of Mr. *Binning's*, may be yet found in the hands of the heirs of Mr. *Denniſton* late Preacher of the Goſpel, his nephew, from whom theſe were purchaſed,

or in the hands of Mr. *Binning's* poſterity; for the Author of his Life ſo often mentioned before, informs us, that there are ſtill ſeveral manuſcripts of Mr. *Binning's* diſcourſes carefully preſerved, which are nothing inferior to any of his printed works: I wiſh he had given ſome account of the ſubjects he handled, and let us know where they were to be found.

The ſubject matter both of theſe forementioned Sermons, and the printed ones, as Mr. *M'Ward*, and the writer of Mr. *Binning's* Life, printed 1735 obſerve, "is practical, and yet rational and argumentative, fit to "inform our judgments, and move our affections; and "when any diſputable or controverted ſubjects came in "in his way, he ſhewed great acuteneſs and judgment "in diſcuſſing and determining them, and no leſs ſkill in "applying them to practice. His diſcourſes are ſolid and "ſubſtantial, ſo ſublime and heavenly, that they not only "feed, but feaſt the reader with marrow and fatneſs. In "the greateſt part of them we meet with much of the "ſublime, expreſſed in the moſt lofty, pathetick, and "moving manner." Mr. *M'Ward* in another paſſage of his letter to his friend, ſays, "That as to the whole "of Mr. *Binning's* writings, I know no man's pen on "the heads he hath handled, more adapted for edifi-"cation, or which with a pleaſant violence will ſooner "find or force a paſſage into the heart of a judicious "reader, and caſt fire ere he is aware into his affections, "and ſet them into a flame: O happy ſurprize! The "ſubjects he diſcourſes upon are handled with ſuch a "pleaſant and profitable variety of thought, and expreſ-"ſion, that the reader or hearer is taken with it, as if "he had never met with it before. He was ſuch a ſkil ful "ſcribe, as he knew how to *bring out of his ſtore things "new and old*: the old with ſuch ſweetneſs and ſavour, "as it ſeemed ſtill new, and the new retained its firſt "ſweetneſs ſo as never to grow old. He was no ſtranger "(ſaith the publiſher of his Life) to the rules of art, and "knew well how to make his method ſubſervient to the "ſubjects he handled, and though he did not always "tell his hearers, that his diſcourſe had ſo many heads

or

" or parts, yet it was very regular, and methodical, be-
" ing, according to the common maxim, the greateſt art
" to conceal art: His language is always eaſy and fluent,
" neat and fine, void of all affectation and bombaſt. His
" ſtile and diction hath neither any ſtarch of luſciouſneſs
" or intricacy, every period of his ſermons has a kind
" of undeſigned negligent elegance, which arreſts the
" reader's attention, and makes what he ſays, as *apples*
" *of gold ſet in pictures of ſilver*. His matter gives life
" to his words, and his words adds a luſtre to his mat-
" ter; ſo that conſidering the time when he lived, it might
" be juſtly ſaid, that he had carried the Orator's prize,
" from his Cotemporaries in *Scotland*; and even was not
" at that time inferior to the beſt pulpit Orators in *Eng-*
" *land*: For it will be acknowledged that the *Engliſh*
" language got ſome greater embelliſhments and refin-
" ings ſome years after he lived."

This writer alſo obſerves, " That the ſubjects of Ser-
" mons are ſo numerous and various, and the order of
" mens diſpoſal of their thoughts, upon theſe ſubjects ſo
" different, that a ſuit of cloaths may be as ſoon made
" to anſwer every man's back, as a fixed and unvari-
" able method may be preſcribed, that ſhall agree to
" every ſubject, and every man's taſte: Mr. *Binning's*
" method was ſingular, and peculiar to himſelf, much
" after the haranguing way." By the *haranguing way*, I ſuppoſe he means, theſe ſermons that are not divided or ſub-divided into doctrinal obſervations and heads, marked by the numbers 1, 2, 3, *&c.* But the Reader will ſee many of theſe diſcourſes, where there are no figures, as firſt, ſecond, third, or any number of heads mentioned, as regularly divided, or ſubdivided, as theſe Sermons, where we will ſee a good number of doctrines and heads; as his ſermons upon 1 *Tim.* i. 5. in this volume, page 120---161, page 227, *&c.* and his ſermons upon the *kingdom of God*, page 231---- and ſeveral others now printed. Some uſeful ſermons have been often perplexed with a a great multitude of heads, conſiſting of two or three ſentences, without any proof or illuſtration, of which the hearer

hearer or reader will remember or retain leſs, than ſome ſermons that contain five or ſix heads, or have not their diſtinct branches marked with different figures or places. I could point out ſome of the ſhorteſt ſermons in the Quarto volume of his printed works 1735, where we will find five or ſix heads in four pages, as pages 68---73. page 92---98. page 596---641, and ſome other places, I have not noticed. Several ſermons I have tranſcribed, as thoſe upon *Acts* xxvi. 18. *Gal.* vi. 14. *Phil.* iv. 6, 7. and many others, evidently ſhew that he did not deliver commonly harangues, without a ſufficient number of different heads; for this reaſon, I wiſh the writer of his printed Life had either omitted, or cautioned and ſoftned the following reflexion, *viz.* " That however Mr. *Binning* ſtudied in his " publick diſcourſes, to condeſcend to the capacity of the " meaner ſort of hearers; yet it muſt be owned, that his " preaching gift, was not ſo much accomodated, and " ſuited to a country congregation, as it was to the ju- " dicious and learned." Mr. *Binning's* Sermons would not have been ſo frequently re-printed, if they had not been as agreeable to the common people in country congregations, as they were to the learned in the holy Miniſtry, and other eminent profeſſions. And both his ſentiments and language, are as agreeable to the ſimplicity of the goſpel, as any ſermons that ever were printed, to all his readers: And I moſt humbly think that his gift of preaching was as much ſuited and accommodated to any country congregation, where there are few or no learned men, as it could be to the moſt learned aſſemblies of Paſtors, Teachers, or other people that are juſtly reckoned the moſt eminent Scholars. If then this obſervation of this writer of his Life, was intended as an encomium, or recommendation of Mr. *Binning's* incomparable learning, and paſtoral abilities; I ſuſpect the readers of all his printed ſermons, or any that may be afterwards publiſhed, will juſtly apprehend, that this writer rather detracteth ſomewhat from his ineſtimable merit, and the real excellency and uſefulneſs of his unexceptionable and valuable compoſitions, than gives a recommendation of them,

them, either to the peruſal or ſtudy of the common people, or the learned: Though I am unwilling to think he deſigned this, when he hath given, both before and after this ſentence, ſuch high and juſt commendations of the ſtile, language, and ſentiments of Mr. *Binning's* elegant and uſeful diſcourſes, in that Quarto volume which was printed 1735.

The following Sermons will, I preſume, be found as agreeable to the form of *ſound words*, the only infallible rule and ſtandard of faith and morals, which we have in the *Scriptures* of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, as any other Sermons which were formerly printed, of this pious and learned Writer, or any Diſcourſes or Eſſays of our *Scots* or *Engliſh* Divines, that have been publiſhed either before or ſince that time; and it will recommend them to my Readers, when they will find nothing in them, either contradictory unto, or ſubverſive of the fundamental principles of the *Proteſtant reformed Religion*, which we have in the *Geneva* or *Weſtminſter Confeſſions of Faith*, or *Catechiſms*, or any other ſound *Syſtems* of *Chriſtianity*, which have been extracted from the incorruptible Fountains of *divine Truth*, we have in the *holy Bible*. His method of preaching was indeed ſomewhat ſingular, and different from the manner of preaching that was commonly uſed in that age; and though the Reader will not find the ſame ſentiments in his Sermons upon 1 *Tim.* i. 5. and *Matth.* vi. 33. and other Sermons I might mention in other Writers upon theſe ſubjects, or find them expreſſed in the ſame form of words; yet it it will be owned, that his ſentiments and principles, are as Scriptural, orthodox, and juſt as any we have yet in print. And I know no Sermons among the great number I have ſeen, better calculated to promote the beſt notions of practical Religion, and the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of Chriſtianity, than theſe which our Author hath written. And not to detain the Reader further from the ſerious and candid peruſal of this book, I ſhall only add, that I have faithfully tranſcribed theſe Sermons from the manuſcript copy, without the ſmalleſt alteration of his ſentiments, I have endeavoured to rectify

a few

a few grammatical errors of the tranſcribers, and the old form of ſpelling, and altered a few words not now uſed in our Modern Sermons, for words of the ſame meaning.

As I have added ſeveral Sermons of this Author upon the *Kingdom of God*, which I tranſcribed ſince the propoſals of this book were printed; ſo I could not inſert the Sermons upon *Acts* xxvi. 18. *Acts* xiv. 11, 12. without almoſt doubling the price, which I feared would not be agreeable to ſome of the encouragers of this work. I intend to put the other Sermons I have tranſcribed, or may yet copy, into the hands of ſome friends, to reviſe before they be printed; as alſo Mr. M'Ward's Life of this worthy Gentleman, taken from his own papers.

As the Sermons of the learned and judicious Mr. *James Durham*, that were lately printed with his Lectures upon *Job*, are very juſtly eſteemed and approven by goodjudges of printed Compoſitions; ſo I have tranſcribed ſeveral other genuine Diſcourſes of that excellent Writer upon religion, *The one thing needful*, Luke x. 41, 42. *The Chriſtian race*, 1 Cor. ix. 24. *walking in the Spirit*, Gal. v. 16. *vain thoughts* Pſal. cxix. 113. and ſeveral other uſeful ſubjects, which may be printed in a ſmall volume of three hundred pages or more, if there is any demand for it. I propoſe alſo to re-print a ſcriptural plain *Catechiſm*, of a worthy miniſter in *Air-ſhire*, who died about thirty ſix years ago, there were two editions of it printed 1742, and 1743. it will be comprized in about three ſheets, with ſome things that have been ſubjoined by a relation of the author's.

As Mr. *Wodrow* wrote large collections upon the lives of our moſt eminent *Reformers*, which he deſigned to publiſh if he had lived longer; ſo the Life and Letters of Mr. *John Knox*, who was commonly ſtiled the *Reformer*, is now preparing for the preſs, to which will be added, ſome of his Eſſays on religious ſubjects never before printed. A liſt of theſe Lives in that valuable collection of this Hiſtorian now mentioned, was inſerted in Mr. *Gille's* Collections upon the *Succeſs of the Goſpel*, lately publiſhed in two volumes. If the publication of Mr. *Knox's* Life be

duly encouraged, ſome more lives of other miniſters in that period, will be tranſcribed and reviſed, for the benefit of the publick who deſire to have them printed.

I have carefully read the following Sermons, and find with pleaſure, that they are very correctly printed; I obſerve no very material error in them, unleſs it be one in the title of the ninth Sermon, which ſhould run thus, *Joy and peace in believing, and the hope that ſprings from them*, and by a ſmall miſtake the laſt Sermon upon 1 *Tim.* i. 5. which ſhould have been placed page 161, is placed after the Eſſay upon Chriſtian Love. I have not printed the large liſt of the Subſcribers, becauſe many of them would not have their names inſerted, and juſtly thought an additional ſheet or two of their names and deſignations, would be an expence that could anſwer no valuable purpoſe. The narrative of Mr. *Binning's* Life, was chiefly copied from Mr. *M'Ward's* letter to his friend, and ſome things are added from the printed Life formerly mentioned.

It is my ſincere wiſh, that all the Readers of this Book, may be builded up in *ſpiritual wiſdom*, and *goodneſs* unto *eternal Life*,

BROUSTERLAND
Sept. 12th 1760.

P. S. I have ſubjoined about four or five ſheets to what was firſt intended to be printed, and as the price of binding ſmall books is raiſed above a penny, by the dearneſs and ſcarcity of leather; ſo I have been obliged to add a ſmall triſle to the price of each book propoſed, to pay the charges of printing and binding, which I hope none of my Readers will grudge, as the book will be as cheap as any that was ever printed in this kingdom.

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BRITISH MUSEUM 30 66 JUL

SERMON

SERMON I.

1 *John.* iii. 23.

And this is his commandment, that ye believe in the name of Christ, and love one another.

IT is a common doctrine often declared unto you, that the most part of these who hear the gospel, do run in their pretended course to heaven, either upon a rock of dashing discouragement, or the sands of sinking presumption. These are in all mens mouths, and no question they are very dangerous, so hazardous as many fools make shipwreck either of the *faith*, or a good *conscience*; of the *faith*, by running upon and dashing upon the rock of a good *conscience* by sitting down upon the quicksand. But I fear that which is commonly confessed by all, is cordially believed by few, and so little regarded in our course, and conversation. All christians pretend to be making a voyage *heaven-ward*, and that is only *home-ward*. Now the gospel is given us to direct our *course*, and teach us how to steer between these two *hazards*, both safely, and surely. This is the shore that shall guide us, and conduct to our intended *haven* that is heaven, if we set our compass by it, and steer our course accordingly. Yet strange it is to behold the infinite

wanderings and errors of men on the one hand or the other, ſome preſuming upon the news of mercy, and the ſound of God's grace, to walk after the imagination of their own hearts, and to live and continue in ſin for which Chriſt died that he might redeem us from it, fancying a poſſibility of living in ſin, and eſcaping wrath, and ſo abuſing the tender of grace to promote licentiouſneſs. Others again apprehending the wrath of God, and their juſt deſervings, abuſing the notion of God's juſtice, and the perfection of his holineſs, to the prejudice of the glory of his grace and mercy, and their own ſalvation. This is certainly the cunning ſlight of Satan, with the deceitfulneſs and ignorance of our own hearts, that leads men, and ſometimes one and the ſame man at diverſe times, to contrary miſapprehenſions of divine truths, the wind of temptation gets fire to one corner of the houſe and then to another, and ſometimes overperſwades the notion of mercy, and another time overſtretches the apprehenſion of his juſtice, and yet in effect there is no true perſwaſion of any of them, but a cloud or ſhadow is apprehended inſtead of them.

Now I ſay, there is one cure for both theſe, the right apprehenſion of the goſpel in its intire and whole ſum, the right uptaking of the light which ſhines in a dark place, and is given to lead us to our place of reſt. To have a compleat model and a ſhort ſummary of the goſpel always in our heart, and eye; for truly it is the apprehending of parcels of divine truth, which leads men into ſuch oppoſite miſtakes, and courſes: to remedy this, we have ſome brief comprehenſive models of the goſpel ſet down by the Holy Ghoſt, and none in better terms than this here. *This is his commandment,*

ment, that ye believe, &c. You have it in two words, *faith*, and *love*. This is the form of sound words which we should hold fast, 2 *Tim. i.* 13. This is the mould of doctrine delivered by Christ, and his Apostles. It is the separation of these two in some mens fancy, that leads too many in such paths of destruction. Truly they can as little be divided as the sun's light and heat, but the motions and shadows of them may, and 'tis the following the shadows of some of them, which ship-wrecks souls. Now not only the common multitude of the hearers of the gospel are in hazard of this, but even God's own children who have believed in him.

The taking up of these things apart, creates the heart much trouble, and perplexity, and occasioneth much sin and stumbling. I do think it is the ignorance and inadvertancy of this conjunction, that makes our case both more sad, and sinful, than otherwise it would be. And these two indeed have a mutual influence upon one another, loosing reins to sin more freely, for it unquestionably disturbs the soul's peace, and procures it much bitterness. And again the quitting hold of the promise of grace in Christ Jesus, and the indulging our own sad, and sullen apprehensions, cannot but in the issue disable the soul from the duties of love, and expose it unto the violence of every temptation. As these two do mutually strengthen one another; the faith of Jesus Christ, and the lively apprehension, of his grace and goodness, so they are the most noble and effectual perswasives to live unto him, and to walk in love. Besides, faith is the mean and way which God hath appointed to convey his influence unto the soul; and then again love carrying it self actively in duties to God and

men, beſtirring it ſelf for God, and thoſe who are beloved of God, it brings in a ſupply to faith, and returns by a ſtraight compaſs to the ſpring from whence it firſt iſſued, and increaſes it ſtill more. Believing on the name of the Son ſends forth the ſtream of holy affection to him, and all begotten of the Father, and this returns again by the circuit of obedience to his commands, and ſubmiſſion to his eaſie yoke, to unboſom it ſelf in the fountain from whence it firſt iſſued; and whereas faith was at firſt one ſimple ſoul-adherence to a Saviour, and a hearty embracing of him, this acceſſion of the fruits of it exalts it unto that height of Aſſurance, and gives it that evidence which is wanted, and faith being thus ſtrengthned, and rooted, and built up to the top of aſſurance of God's grace, love, and ſalvation, it becomes more able to bear the yoke of his commands, *which are not grievous*. The ſpring of believing thus ſwell'd by the concurrence of ſo many ſtreams, it breaks forth the more, and ſends out more love and delight in God, and more *charity*, *compaſſion*, and *meekneſs* towards men. And this is the circle and round chriſtianity runs, until that day come that the head-ſpring of faith ſhall be obſcur'd and ſhrivelled up in the great Sea of the love God, which ſhall overflow all the ſaints graces in due time, when we ſhall ſee God face to face.

This is a true chriſtian, which this apoſtle ſo beloved of God deſcribes, Here is one under a commandment, and not above it, as ſome fondly conceive: He is a keeper of his commands, and a doer of theſe things which are pleaſant in God's ſight. This is no legal notion, if it be right taken.

It is not the bondage of the creature, to be under the

he command of God, truly it isthe beauty and liberty of a reaſonable ſoul; ſome ſpeak of all ſubjection unto a law as *ſlavery*, but is it not an infinitely greater ſlavery to be at liberty to ſin, and ſerve our own luſts. *O wretched and baſe liberty!* he Son indeed makes us truly free, and that from ſin; and he is truly a Redeemer who redeems us from all iniquity, John viii. 32. Pſal. cxxx. ult. Tit. ii. 14.

But this commandment here ſpoken of, would not indeed be goſpel, unleſs there was a prior command a brighter precept given by the Father to the Son; I find two commands given by the Father, and received by the Son, which two you may conjoin and make one of, as here faith and love are made one commandment. The firſt is, John x. 18. *I lay down my life of myſelf, no man taketh it from me, this commandment have I received from my Father* and no other. John xii. 49, 50. *The Father gave me a commandment, what I ſhould ſay, and ſpeak, and I know that his commandment is life everlaſting.* This is more expreſly and clearly ſet down John vi. 39, 40. *This is the Father's will that ſent me, that of all that he gave me I ſhould loſe none, but raiſe them up at the laſt day. This is the will of him that ſent me, that every one which ſeeth the Son, and believeth on him, ſhould have everlaſting life.* Here then beloved in the Lord, is the foundation of our hope, and that which makes all commandments given by God to us, to come under a goſpel-notion, that which makes Chriſt's yoke eaſy, and his burden light, and his commands not grievous. The great commandment was impoſed upon our Saviour, the great weight of that wrath due to our ſins, was put upon his ſhoulders; this was the Father's will that he ſhould lay down his life for his ſheep; this

command he received willingly, and obeyed faithfully, and fully. And by his obedience to this that great obligation to ſatisfy God's juſtice, and pay a ranſom for our ſouls is taken off us; in as much as he died, juſtice cannot come and demand it at our hand. Now therefore there is another commandment given to Chriſt, which directly concerns us, and it is this in ſubſtance, "I will and command that thou who has come in the place of ſinners, and reſolves to die for them, that thou give eternal life to whom thou will, even to as many as believe in thy name; I give to thee the abſolute diſpoſal of life and death; I command thee to preach life everlaſting to all pious ſouls, that ſhall flee unto thee upon the apprehenſion of the danger of death, and that thou beſtow that life upon them, and raiſe them up at the laſt day to be partakers of it." This is the commiſſion the Father gave to the Son, a ſweet commiſſion for poor ſinners, and the charter of our ſalvation. And for this errand he was anointed with the holy Spirit, and ſent into the world: nay, the commiſſion extends further than grace, even to eternal glory alſo. Chriſt has received commandment of the Father, to give repentance and remiſſion of ſin, both to give faith, and love, and all other graces, elſe it were defective. Thus Chriſt comes inſtructed to the world, he lays open his commiſſion in preaching the goſpel, he obeys the firſt commandment in his own perſon, by offering up himſelf upon the croſs a ſacrifice for ſins, and he is about the fulfilling the next commandment, that is the giving life to them that believe: and that he may accompliſh it having aſcended himſelf unto heaven to interceed for us, he alſo ſent his ambaſſadors into the world, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation, and he gives them commiſ-

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ſion to publiſh andproclaim this commandment in his own name; *this is his command that ye believe in the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* And this we do proclaim in his name, ſince he has gotten a commandment to give life everlaſting to believers; then this is his charge to you, to come and receive it from him; come and embrace him, and ye ſhall have life and all in him; this is the hardeſt and heavieſt burden he impoſes upon you, the weight of your life and ſalvation he hath taken upon himſelf. But oh now come and lay hold on him, who is thus offered unto you. Know that you are loſt and undone in yourſelves, conſider the impoſſibilities you ly under to eſcape his wrath. Behold the anger of God hanging over your head, ready to be revealed in flaming fire and a tempeſtuous cloud of eternal miſery; will ye conſider that ye are born heirs of wrath, your natural inheritance is in the lake of fire; and whatſoever your endowments by nature, or your privileges by birth be, nothing ſhall exeem thee from this; ſhall not then this Saviour be welcome to thee? For truly faith is but a cordial ſalutation and embracement of our bleſſed Redeemer; the ſoul brings him into the houſe, and makes him welcome, and he is ſtanding ready to come in to your heart, and to bring in ſalvation with him.

Now whatever ſoul hath obeyed this commandment by belief of the truth, and receiving of Chriſt into the heart, there is but one commandment behind, and it is not grievous, viz. love me, and love one another, love me and live unto me. This is an eaſy yoke, and there is good reaſon for it, though it had never been required to love him, and live to him, *who loved not his life unto the death* for us. There is mention made only of brotherly love here, but certainly the other love to God

flowing from the ſenſe of his love, is the right wing of the ſoul, and brotherly-love the left; and by theſe the pious ſoul mounts up to heaven with the wings of an eagle: the love of our brother is but the fruit and conſequent of this love, but it is ſet down as a probation, and clear evidence of the love of God in our ſouls.

Love is commanded as the very ſum and ſubſtance of the whole law, as the fountain of all other duties; things are compacted in their cauſes, and lie hid within the vertue of them. Truly this is the way to perſuade and conſtrain you to all the duties of godlineſs and righteouſneſs, of piety towards God, and charity towards men. If once we could faſten this chain of affection upon your hearts, and engage your ſouls by love to God and man; we cannot but beat the air, while we ſeek to perſuade you to the ſerious practice of religious duties, of prayer in ſecret, and in your families, of reading and meditation upon the word, of ſanctifying the ſabbath, of dealing juſtly and moderately with all men, of ſobriety and temperance in your converſation; of denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, of walking humbly with God, and towards men, of reſtraining and ſubduing your inordinate luſts and paſſions; I ſay, it is almoſt in vain to preſs theſe things upon you, or expect them from you, till once the Spirit of power and love enter into your hearts; and indeed the Spirit of love is a powerful Spirit, the love of God poſſeſſing the heart within, cannot but conform all within and without to his love and good pleaſure: love only can do theſe things which are pleaſant in his ſight, for it doth them pleaſantly, heartily, and chearfully, and God loves a chearful giver, a chearful worſhipper. Brotherly love is rather expreſſed, becauſe little or not all ſtudied by the moſt part, other duties to God, if

if men come not up in practice to them, yet they approve them in their ſoul and mind: but there is ſcarce a notion of the obligation of charity and love towards our brethren, yea not ſo much as in the minds of Chriſtians let be in their practice: it is the ſpecial command which Chriſt left to his diſciples when he was going away, John xiii. 35. but alas we have forgotten it 'tis ſo long ſince.

SERMON II.

1 John iii. 23. *This is his Commandment, that* &c.

WE commonly make many rules in religion, and turn it into a laborious art, full of intricate queſtions, precepts, and contentions: as there hath been a great deal of vanity in the conception of ſpeculative divinity, by a multitude of vain and unedifying queſtions which have no profit in them, or are beneficial to them that are occupied therein, but only have ſtirred up ſtrife and envy, and boiled the flame of contention in the Chriſtian world; ſo I fear that practical divinity be no leſs vitiated and ſpoiled in this age amongſt true Chriſtians (by many perplexed caſes relating to every condition) than the other among the ſchool-men; hereby it ſeems to me, that Chriſt and his Apoſtles did not ſuppoſe it to be ſo perplexed a buſineſs as we now do make it; neither did the hearers weary themſelves, or others with ſo many various objections againſt the practice of the fundamental commandment of the goſpel, believing in Jeſus Chriſt; the plain nature of the goſpel being holden forth and received, I am perſuaded was and is able (like the ſun ariſing in brightneſs) to diſpel and ſcatter all theſe miſts and clouds which do ariſe both in the one and other, from ignorance

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at firſt, and are elevated to a greater height, by the cuſtom of the times: the matter my brethren, is not ſo dark as you make it, here it is plainly and ſimply expreſſed: *This is his commandment that ye believe in the name of his Son*, and then *love one another*: ye all know that we had commandments given us by God, which were by nature impreſſed on the heart of man; but by his fall into ſin, the tables of the law (which I may ſay were in Adam's mind and heart, underſtanding and affection) thoſe two tables were broken in the fall, and ſince there could be no obedience, becauſe of ignorance and perverſion, the tables breaking in pieces, their ruptures have produced theſe two oppoſite principles; the fall of man hath broken his mind, and ſo darkned his underſtanding, and broken his will, and put it in a wrong ſet; this appointed it, ſet it in a poſture of enmity againſt God, however we are by this fall utterly diſabled to ſtand up before God in acceptable obedience, there is no man breathing, how blameleſs ſoever he be before the world, but he muſt fall down as guilty before God, in many things, yea in all things: but the law being thus obliterated out of mens conſciences, as he loſt ability to obey, ſo he loſt almoſt all conſcience of ſin and diſobedience, he not knowing his charge and obligation, could not accuſe himſelf for falling in rebellion; therefore it pleaſed the Lord to cauſe the law to be written in tables of ſtone in mount Sinai; he tranſcribes the commandments over again that all the world may ſee their obligation, and how infinitely ſhort they have come in their ſubjection, and how juſt their condemnation may be: for this purpoſe the Lord cauſes proclaim the old bond in the ears of men with great majeſty and authority as it became the Law-giver, that all may become guilty and ſtop their mouth before God,

God, *Rom.* iii. 19. He would once have all men knowing that they are under infinite breaches of his commandments, that they may see themselves also subject to his judgment, now what do you think of a soul that stands at the foot of this mountain, and hears a dreadful accusation, read against it, to all which the conscience within must subscribe unto, and both together pronounce the person guilty and liable to eternal punishment. I say what can such a soul do, who has with trembling heard his voice, satisfaction there cannot be given for an infinite offence against an infinite nature, the curse and sentence which was the sanction and confirmation of this commandment that is just, and there appears no way how without violation of God's justice it can be repealed. Obedience to these commandments is now both impossible and unprofitable; impossible I say, because of the weakness, and wickedness of the flesh, that has no ability nor willingness but to offend and disobey; and unprofitable, because it cannot at all relax the former sentence of condemnation: now obedience being a present duty cannot pay old debts, or satisfy for our former rebellions, and so it must leave a man to seen condemnation, I fear this is a puzzle that all consciences must come unto here, or else where, here is a strait indeed.

But yet there is an enlargement, there is a way found out of bringing the soul out of the miry clay, and deep pit of misery, and it is this, God hath found out a ransom for himself, without our procurement, or consent or knowledge: He hath provided a satisfaction to his justice in his Son Jesus Christ, having laid upon him our iniquities, he exacts of him our deserved punishment, and makes him a curse who knew no sin; now this being done, the Lord sends forth to all poor sinners

ners who are trembling at mount Sinai this proclamation, this is my laſt and moſt peremptory command, that ye believe in the name of my Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him. Have ye heard me the lawgiver condemning you, now go and hear him the Mediator and Saviour abſolving you, for I have committed all judgment unto him, tho' I pronounce the ſentence in this world againſt you, yet I have committed all the execution of it to him, and if you come to him you may prevent it; you have broken all my former commandments, and I have pronounced a ſentence againſt you for that. But now I give a new commandment inſtead of all the former, which if you obey, then the ſentence of death is relaxed, you who cannot obey the law and give ſatisfaction in your own perſons, I charge you to flee unto my ſon Chriſt, who hath given me full ſatisfaction both to the curſe, by ſuffering, and to the command by obedience, and lay hold on his righteouſneſs as your own, and in him ye are juſtified, and delivered from all theſe ſentences and hard writings againſt you. I give a new commandment as the cure and remedy of all broken commandments, believe on this name, in which is ſalvation, take his obedience and ſuffering for your cure and preſent me with that, I ſhall be as well ſatisfied as with your own perſonal ſatisfaction.

This now is very plain buſineſs, all commands are broken, there is yet one publiſhed in the goſpel to help all, and it is in ſubſtance to embrace and welcome Jeſus Chriſt for all, to ſeek our life and ſalvation in him, to take him as a prieſt to offer ſacrifice for us, and expiate our ſins, and to come to him as a prophet to ſeek wiſdom and illumination, and all grace from him, to choice

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him as our king henceforth to ſubmit to his eaſy yoke of government. Now I ſay there will be no more debates about this: will ye yet diſpute whether ye may believe or not, will ye enquire after this whether you have a warrant or not; truly ſuch a queſtion would occaſion much jealouſie and provocation among men. If a man had ſignified as much willingneſs by command, by invitation, by requeſt, by frequent repetition of theſe, yet to call in queſtion or diſpute whether or not I may go to ſuch a perſon, will he make me welcome, were it not the greateſt affront I could put upon him, would it not alienate his affection more than any thing, to be jealous of his real kindneſs to me.

I would deſire to hold out unto you the ſin, the danger, and the vanity of ſuch a way. I ſay the ſin is great, 'tis no leſs than the higheſt and moſt painous diſobedience to the goſpel, which of all others, is of the deepeſt dye; you have diſobeyed the law and broken all the ten commandments, and will ye therefore diſobey the goſpel too, and break this fundamental commandment. Is it not enough that ye have broken the reſt, and will ye break this alſo which was given for the cure of all? Conſider I ſay this is his commandment; now commands ſhould be obeyed, and not diſputed, coming from an infallible and uncontroulable authority. Would ye not ſilence all the rebellions of your hearts againſt the commands of praying, hearing, reading, dealing juſtly, and walking ſoberly, with this one word, it is his command, it is his ſovereign will, and why do ye not ſee the ſtamp of that ſame authority upon this? Now if you conſider it aright, it hath more authority upon it than upon others, becauſe it is his laſt command and ſo would be taken as moſt pungent and weighty: when your hearts riſe up to queſtion

and

and diſpute this matter, I pray you cut all theſe knotty objections with the ſword of his commandment, you uſe to go about to looſe them by particular anſwers and untie them at leiſure with art and ſkill, but truly it would be a readier and wiſer courſe to cut them in pieces at one ſtroke, by this piercing and pungent precept. If your reaſons and ſcruples be weighty, and you cannot get anſwers to overbalance them, I pray you put this weighty ſeal of divine authority into the balance, and ſure I am it will weigh down all. Conſider then the danger of it, it is the laſt and moſt peremptory command, after which you may expect no other, but the execution of juſtice. How ſad and ſevere is the certification, *He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.*. There needs no new ſentence to be pronounced againſt you, why, becauſe if you believe not, that prior ſentence of the law is yet ſtanding above your heads to condemn you, that wrath abides on you, this is the only way to remove it, to come to him, who hath taken it on himſelf, after the breach of all commands, yet have this retreat, this refuge to flee unto, a new command to come unto the Son, and have life, but after this diſobedience of the Son, you have none, there is nothing after unbelief, but ye are turned over, or rather left over in the hand of the law and divine juſtice, therefore it is the moſt dangerous and damnable thing to diſobey this, it is to refuſe the very remedy of ſin. Conſider alſo what vanity and uſeleſsneſs is in theſe debates, what an unreaſonable and ſenſeleſs thing is it to diſpute againſt our own ſoul, and againſt our own happineſs; all is wrapt up here, and we do no leſs than the higheſt act of ſelf murder that can be. He that hateth me, wrongs his own ſoul, what an

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unreaſonable thing then is it becauſe ye are miſerable, to refuſe mercy, becauſe ye are unclean, therefore to maintain that ye are not to come to the bleſſed fountain of cleanſing, becauſe ye have broken the reſt of the commands, therefore ye may not obey this. Is there any ſenſe or reaſon in ſuch things, becauſe I am a ſinner, therefore I will not come to a Saviour; *Alas!* to what purpoſe was the Son ſent and given, and for what end came he, was it not to ſeek and to ſave ſuch as are loſt, and undone, and to deliver them from miſery. What do you gain by ſuch queſtions, for at length you muſt turn and enter in at the door of a naked command, and promiſe, when you have wearied yourſelves to find that in your hearts which is not in them, to ſeek waters in the wilderneſs, and ſprings in the deſart; qualifications and graces in your own hearts to warrant your boldneſs in coming to the promiſe. I ſay, when you have ſought and all in vain, you muſt at length come to this fountain in which is all grace and happineſs, if you had what you ſeek, yet if ye would indeed believe in Chriſt, you muſt deny them and look upon yourſelves as ungodly, to be juſtified by faith. Why then do you graſp after that which can do you no good, (though you had it) I mean to be in point of your acceptation. Conſider it my beloved, that the honour of God and your own happineſs lies moſt in this, nay not only that, but your holineſs too which you pretend to ſeek after lies in it, till you come to Chriſt, it is in vain to ſeek it elſewhere.

SERMON

SERMON. III.

1 John iii. 23. And this is his Commandment &c.

THere are different tempers of mind among men, ſome more ſmooth and pliable, others more refractory and froward; ſome may be perſwaded by love, who cannot be conſtrained by fear, with ſome a requeſt will more prevail than a command, others again of a harſher diſpoſition love and condeſcenſion doth rather embolden them, and therefore they muſt be reſtrained with the bridle of authority. It would ſeem that the Lord hath ſome regard to this in the adminiſtration of the goſpel, he accomodates himſelf to the diverſe diſpoſitions of men and (if we may ſay with reſpect to him which yet can be no diſreſpect ſeeing he hath humbled himſelf lower) he doth become all things to all men, that he may gain ſome. Ye ſee the goſpel ſometimes running in the channel of love and kindneſs, ſometimes in the channel of authority and majeſty, God ſometimes ſtoopeth down to invite, and affectionately to beſeech ſinners to come unto his Son for life. He hath prepared a marriage and banquet for us in Chriſt: he hath made all things ready for the receiving, for the eating, and he ſends forth his ſervants to intreat and invite all ſuch, who have no bread and cloathing, who are poor and lame to this wedding. He gives an hearty invitation to all that ſtand at in infinite diſtance from God, and ſo are feeding upon empty vanities without him, to come and enjoy the riches of his grace which runs as a river in Chriſt between theſe two golden banks, the pardon of ſin, and the puri-

cation

ion of our ſouls from its pollution: you have
earty invitation, Iſa. lv. 1. 2. 3. *Ho, every*
that thirſteth, come to the waters. But he comes
lower to requeſt and obteſt poor ſinners, as if
could have advantage by it, he will not ſtand
e a ſupplicant at any man's door, to beſeech
to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. v. 14, 19, 20.
if we could do him a favour and benefit, he
ueſts us moſt earneſtly. Truly it is ſtrange,
this doth not melt the heart, and make it fall
n into the belief and obedience of the truth.
ction is the moſt inſinuating and prevailing
g with an ingenious ſpirit, moſt of all when
accompanied with majeſty in the perſon that
it, and humility in the carriage and diſpoſi-
; for a great perſonage to deſcend out of love,
affectionate and humble requeſts and ſolicita-
s, this cannot but have a mighty influence on
ſpirit that is not wild and ſavage; but becauſe
heart of man is deſperately wicked, and hath
that true ingenuity and nobleneſs of ſpirit, and
now become ſtubborn and froward, as a wild
or as a *ſwift dromedary traverſing her ways*,
efore the Lord takes another way of dealing
h men ſuitable to their froward natures; he
s out his royal ſtature backed with majeſty and
hority; *this is his command*, &c. That when
means could not prevail, other means more
ible might reduce moſt rebellious men. He
gets in our way with threatnings and promiſes
xed to the commandment, *He that believeth*
everlaſting life, but he that believeth not is con-
demned already, and ſhall not ſee life, but the wrath
of God abideth on him. He declares all men trai-
if they come not in to his Son, to be recon-
d to God, before the decree of wrath paſs

Truly 'tis a wonder that there ſhould be a need either of an invitation, or a requeſt, or a command, or a threatning; that we ſhould need to be invited, or requeſted, or commanded, or threatned to our own happineſs; might not a bare and ſimple offer, or propoſal of Jeſus Chriſt, his nature and offices, of the redemption and ſalvation purchaſed by him, ſuffice? What needed more, but to declare unto us that we are loſt and utterly undone by nature, and that there is a refuge and remedy provided in Chriſt. Surely in any other thing of little importance, we needed no intreaty: were it not a good enough invitation to a man that is like to ſtarve for hunger, to caſt meat before him; or to a man that is in hazard of drowning to caſt a cord to him. We would need no other perſuaſion to go and dig for a treaſure of gold, than to ſhew us where it is hid: but ſtrange is the rebellions and perverſe diſpoſition of man's heart; what an enmity is in it to the ways of God! What ſtrange inclination to ſelf-murder, ever ſince man deſtroyed himſelf! we cannot expreſs it unto you; but you may perceive it well enough, both by the Lord's frequent obteſting, and proteſting to us in his word, and the experience of the great barrenneſs of all ſuch means; whence is it I pray you, that there ſhould need ſo many means to perſuade you to that which is your own advantage, and to call you to ſhun the ways of deſtruction? And whence is it that notwithſtanding of all these invitations, intreaties, commandments, promiſes, and threatnings often ſounding in your ears, yet the moſt part are not reduced to obedience, nor reclaimed from the ways of death, and do not take hold of the path of life, truly it may plainly point out to you, the deſperate wickedneſs of the heart, the ſtubborneſs and rebelliouſneſs of our diſpo-

on, and if once we could perſuade you of this, e had gained a great point which few do ſeriouſly conſider, and ſo do not abhor themſelves.

The commandments mentioned in the text are eſe two, to believe in Chriſt, and to love our gther: 'tis no wonder they are recommend- with ſo much ſeriouſneſs and earneſtneſs; for ey are both the moſt comprehenſive, and the oſt pleaſing commandments. They are moſt mprehenſive; for it appears that all the com- ands ſpoken of in the preceeding verſe, are ſum- ed up in this one precept, *and this is his com- andment, &c.* And that they are moſt pleaſant in od's ſight is evident, for the true Chriſtian being ſcribed from this, that he does theſe things which e pleaſing in God's ſight, that he is one, that udies to conform himſelf to his good pleaſure; is is ſubjoined as the two moſt pleaſing exerciſes Chriſtianity, *This is his commandment*, that is, s pleaſing-commandment that ye ſhould believe Chriſt, and love one another.

This command of believing in Jeſus, is com- ehenſive, becauſe it takes in all precepts, and at under a three-fold conſideration. It takes them in as broken and tranſgreſſed by men, as ful- lled by Chriſt, and alſo takes them all in as a le of righteouſneſs according to which the be- ver ought henceforth to walk.

The command of believing in Chriſt doth firſt all import this, that a ſinner ſhould examine mſelf according to the law of God, that he ſhould y his whole life and courſe, his heart, and ways own before the perfect and holy commandments, at he may ſtop his own mouth with ſhame and ence, and find himſelf guilty before God. Mercy es to ſpeak of humiliation preparatory to believ- g, and the work of the law preparatory to the

gospel: but truly I conceive it would be more f
expressed, if it were holden out thus, that it is
of the essential ingredients in the bosom of belie
ing, and one of the first articles of the gospel h
to charge all sinners to acknowledge their sin a
misery, to discern their own abounding iniqui
and danger of perishing by it, how guilty they
before God, and how subject to his judgment, t
so finding themselves undone, they may have
course to a Saviour.

Truly the Spirit's work is to convince of sin, a
then of righteousness, and when we are command
to believe, the first part of our believing is credi
ing and subscribing to the law, to the justice a
righteousness of God against us; and then the b
lieving and acknowledging the gospel is the en
and purpose to that: *Ye believe in God, believe a
in me*, this takes in compleatly the two books
saving faith towards God as a Law-giver an
Judge, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,
a Saviour and Redeemer; and it doth but beg
misapprehensions in many, when the one is look
upon as a condition without which we shall not
welcome to the other: truly I think both are pr
posed as essentials of saving faith, none of the
in such a way as to procure right and warrant
the other, but only in such an order as is suitab
to any reasonable nature to be wrought upon, an
that is all. It is only required of you, upon th
account, because fleeing unto a Saviour for refug
is a rational and deliberate action which necessari
includes the sense of misery without him: but t
sense of sin and misery is not urged as one thi
which ye should go about to prepare, and fit you
selves for more welcome at Christ's hand, as com
monly it is taken. Here it is easy to understan
how the command of believing belongs unto

ho hear it, even to the vileſt and groſſeſt ſinners
ho are yet ſtout, hard-hearted, and far from
ghteouſneſs, Iſa. xlvi. 12. theſe who are ſpend-
g their money for that which is not bread, and
eir labour for that which ſatisfies not. And thoſe
hoſe hearts are uncircumciſed, and their lives
rofane, and yet the commandment of coming to
e Son and believing on him for life, is extended
to them all; all are invited, requeſted, com-
anded, and threatned to this duty; there is no
r of excluſion ſet down in the goſpel to hold out
e, and let in another, as many ſuppoſe: theſe
omiſes that ſound condition-wiſe, to be limita-
ns, and reſtrictions of the right and warrant to
ſons to believing. Indeed it is true all are not
horted at the firſt hand to aſſurance of God's love,
d an intereſt in Chriſt: there is no queſtion that
ne have right to this ſeal, but them who have
lieved and ſet to their own ſeal to the character
truth of the word: but all are charged to be-
ve in Chriſt, that is, out of a ſenſe of their own
eſtate to embrace a Saviour for righteouſneſs,
d ſtrength. Neither is there any fear that men
come too ſoon to Chriſt. We need not ſet
wn excluſions or extractions, for if they be not
ſible of ſin and miſery, they will certainly not
me to him at all; and therefore the command
t enjoins them to believe on the Son, charges
n alſo to believe that they are loſt without him:
if the moſt preſumptuous ſinners would once
e obedience to this commandment, really there
uld be no fear of preſumption in coming too
n unto Jeſus. A ſenſe of ſin is not ſet as a por-
to keep out any who are willing to come in;
rather to open the door, and conſtrain them
were unwilling to enter in; ſo that if the
meaſure of that can do this, we are not to
ſtan

ſtand till we have more, but to come to the prince exalted to get remiſſion of ſins, and more true goſpel-ſorrow which worketh repentance unto ſalvation, from dead works. You would not therefore underſtand any promiſes in the ſcriptures, ſo as if there were any conditions ſet down to ſeclude any from coming, who are willing to come; for they do but declare the nature and manner of what they are invited to, that no man miſtake believing, and take his own empty preſumptions or fancies which embolden him to ſin more, for that true faith which is full of good fruits.

Now in the text the pious ſoul having once ſubſcribed to the guilt and curſe of all the commandments, by believing the law: he looks alſo upon the Son, Jeſus Chriſt, and finds the law fulfilled, the curſe removed, all ſatisfied in him. He finds all the commandments obeyed in his perſon, and the wrath due for the breach of them pacified and quenched by his ſufferings. And he gives a cheerful and cordial approbation of all this; he receives Chriſt as the end of the law for righteouſneſs, which Chriſt made up by obedience and ſuffering to ſupply our diſobedience. We ſhould ſtay or reſt upon this, as that which pacifies the Father's wrath to the full. This is what gives the anſwer of a good conſcience, and pacifies every penitent ſoul, and ſecures his title to heaven. Now this preſents God with a full atonement and obedience to all the law which he accepts from a believer as if it were his own. This is the large comprehenſion of believing, it takes in its arms, as it were, in one bundle all the precepts and curſes, and devolves them over on Chriſt, puts them in an able hand, who then takes them all as ſatisfied and fulfilled by him and holds them up in one bundle to the Father

And hence it proceeds in the third place, that elieving on the Son takes in all again, to be the le of walking, and the mark to aim at; finding ch a perfect exoneration of bygones in Christ, nd standing in such favour with God, the soul is weetly constrained to love and delight in the di-ine laws; and truly this is the natural result of ith. I wish you may rightly observe this conjunc-ion, that this is inseparably knit with it; love to God and men, delight to do his will, to love him, nd live unto him. Do not deceive yourselves with ain words, if you find not the smartness of the ospel, and the doctrine of grace laying this re-traint upon the heart, ye are yet in your sins. This is the reasoning of a believing soul, Shall I who am dead unto sin, live any longer therein? Shall I not delight in those commandments, when Christ hath delivered me from the curse of the law? Though such a one fall, and come short, yet the reasure of the heart is that way. But then attend nto the order, ye must first believe on the Son, nd then love him, and live unto him. Ye must irst flee unto his righteousness, and then the righ-eousness of the law shall be wrought in you. Therefore do not weary yourselves to no purpose; o not wrong your own souls by seeking to prevent his order, which was established for your joy, and alvation, know that you must first meet with sa-isfaction in all the commands of Christ, before obedience to any of them be accepted, and having met with that, know that the sincere endeavour of thy soul, and the affectionate bensal of thy heart o thy duty, is accepted. And if ye find yourselves hereafter surcharged with guilt and unanswerable walking, yet ye know the way is to begin at this gain, to believe in the Son. This is the round you must walk, as long as ye are in the body, when

you are defiled run into the fountain, and wh
you are washed, study to keep your garmen
clean; but if defiled again get your hearts w
ed from wickedness. *These things*, says Jo
*I write to you that ye sin not, who believe, bu
any sin*, who desire not to transgress, *you hav
propitiation for the sins of the whole world.*

Now love is a very comprehensive comman
it is the fulfilling of the whole law, Rom. xiii,
Matth. xxii 37, 38. it is indeed the true princi
and pure fountain of our obedience unto God a
man: all fruits of the Spirit are moral virtues th
grow out of the believer, whether pleasant unto Go
or refreshing unto men, they are all virtually
this root of love, all the streams are compacted
this fountain, therefore he names one for all, vi
brotherly-love which is the bond of perfectio
Col. iii. 14. It is a bundle of many divine grac
a company or society of many Christian virtu
combined together. They are named *bowels
mercies, long-suffering, kindness, humbleness
mind, meekness, forbearance, and forgiveness*,
which are tied to the believer's girdle by charity
so that where love is, every good comes: after
a troop of so many sweet endowments and orn
ments also come, and where this is wanting, (
truly it is the epidemical disease of the time) the
are many sins abounding; for when *iniquity abou
the love of many shall wax cold*, Matth. xxiv.
Oh that is our temper, or rather our distemper
nature, love cold, and passion hot. When chari
goes away, these wild and savage beasts of dar
ness come forth, viz. bitter envying and stri
rigid censuring and judging, unmercifulness
implacableness of spirit, upon others failings a
offences, self-love that keeps the throne, and
the rest are her attendants; for where self-love
pri

pride is, there is contention, ſtrife, envy, and every evil work, and all manner of confuſion; thus they lead one another as in a chain of darkneſs, Prov. xiii. 10. James iii. 16. Think not that love is a complimental word, and an idle motion of loving, it is a more real thing, a more vital thing, it hath bowels of mercy, they move themſelves when others are moved, and they bring their neighbour's miſery into the inmoſt ſeat of the heart, and makes the ſpirit a ſolemn companion in miſery; and it is alſo exerciſed in forbearing and forgiving; *Charity is not eaſily provoked*, therefore it can forbear, is eaſily appeaſed, therefore it can forgive, it is not ſoon diſpleaſed, or hard to be pleaſed, *forbearing and forgiving one another in love.* Study then this grace more, ſee it to be the fulfilling of the law; *for the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, a good conſcience, and faith unfeigned.* The end of the law is not ſtrife and debate, nor ſuch intricate and perplexed matters, as miniſter endleſs queſtions, and no edification; though men pretend conſcience and ſcripture, yet the great end of both is violated, that is charity, which mainly ſtudies edification in truth and love. And therefore its a violent perverſion of the commandment, or word, to overſtretch every point of conſcience, or difference, ſo far as to the renting of Chriſtian peace and unity. What hath kindled all theſe flames of bloody war, what hath increaſed all theſe fiery contentions among us, but the want of this? As James ſays of the tongue, ſo I may ſpeak of uncharitableneſs and ſelf-love, *they ſet on fire the courſe of nature, and they are ſet on fire of hell.* The true zeal and love of God, is like that elementary fire of which they ſpeak, that in its own place hath a temperate heat, and doth not burn or conſume what is about it. But our zeal is like the fire that is mixed with ſome groſs matter,

matter, a preying, devouring, and consuming thing; zeal down in the lower region of man's heart, is mixed with many gross corruptions, which are as oil and fewel to it, and gives it an extreme intemperate destroying nature.

But then consider, that this commandment of love is our Lord and Saviour's last testamentary injunction to his disciples, John xiii. 34, 35, 36. *A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* It is Christ's latter will, and given us as a token and badge of discipleship. Every profession hath its own signs and rules; every order their own symbol, every rank their own character; here is the differential, or peculiar character, and livery of a Christian, brotherly-love, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*, &c. I remember a story of a dying father, who called his sons to him on his death-bed, and having sent for a bundle of arrows, he tried them one by one, if they could break them; and when they had all tried this in vain, he caused loose the bundle, and take the arrows one by one, and so they were easily broken: by which he gave them to understand, that their stability and strength would consist in unity and concord; but if love and charity was broken, they were exposed to great hazard. I think our Lord and Saviour gives such a precept unto his disciples at his departure out of this world, *a new command I give unto you*, &c. John xiii 35. to shew them that the perfection of the body, into which they were all called as members, consisted in that bond of charity. And indeed love is not only a bond or bundle of perfection in respect of graces, but in regard of the church too; it is the bond

bond or tye which knits all the members into one perfect body, Col. iii. 14, 15, 16. Without this bond all muſt needs be rents, rags and diſtractions.

Now I ſhall add but one word of the other, that theſe commands are pleaſing in God's ſight, and truly believing in the Son, muſt be grateful to him, not only from the general nature of obedience to his will, but alſo becauſe this doth moſt honour both to the Father and to the Son; the Father counts himſelf much honoured, when we honour the Son; and there is no honour the creature can be in a capacity to give unto him like this, to caſt all our hope, and hang all our happineſs upon him, John v. 23, 24. *to ſet to our ſeal that he is true and faithful*, John iii. 33. which is done by believing. But moſt of all this is pleaſing in his ſight, becauſe the Father's good pleaſure concenters in the ſame point with the ſoul's good pleaſure, that is on the well-beloved Son Chriſt, therefore faith muſt needs be well-pleaſing to the Father; for what is faith elſe but the ſoul's complacency and ſatisfaction in the Son? As the Father is already well-pleaſed with his death and ſufferings, ſo he propones and holds him out in the goſpel, that you may be as well-pleaſed with him as he is. This is believing indeed to be pleaſed with him, as the Father is pleaſed, and this pleaſes the Father too. Oh that you could underſtand this; the goſpel is not brought unto you, that you may reconcile God, and procure a change in his affection, but for this end to beſeech you to be reconciled unto God, to take away all hoſtile affections out of your heart; and this is the buſineſs we have to do, to perſuade you that the Father holds him abundantly contented with his Son, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleaſed.*

And

And to move you to be as well contented with him as he is, hear him, I hear him for you, hear ye him for me, I hear him interceeding for you, hear ye him beseeching you. Now this may take down all ground of jealousy concerning our welcome and acceptance, it cannot but be an acceptable and pleasing thing to God, that the affections and desire of the soul fall in and embosom itself with his good pleasure upon Christ his Son.

And then in the next place it is well-pleasing to God that ye love one another, not only because he shall see his own image and likeness in your love, for there is nothing on which a Christian more eminently resembles his Father, or more evidently appears to be a child of the Highest, than in free loving all, *especially the houshold of faith*, and forbearing and forgiving one another, and so he cannot chuse but like it well: But especially because your love concenters too, and meets upon the same object with his love: these whom the Father so loved, that he gave his only begotten Son, and the Son so loved them, that he gave himself for them. If these be thy delight, and thou forbear them as the Father and the Son hath done, that conspiracy of affections into one point cannot but be pleasing unto him, now if these please him so well, whom should they not please.

SERMON IV.

James. iii. 14. *But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not*, &c.

IT is a common evil of those who hear the gospel, that they are not delivered up to the mould and frame of religion that is holden out in it, but rather

ather they bring religion into a mould of their wn invention. It was the ſpecial commendation f the *Romans, that they obeyed from the heart, hat form of doctrine into which they were deliver-d*, Rom. vi. 16. That they who were once ervants, or ſlaves of ſin, had now become volun-ary captives of truth, and had given themſelves p to the goſpel, to be modelled and faſhioned by , and if ſo then certainly the moſt ſubſtantial oints of religion would be moſt deeply engraven pon them, Every thing would have its own due lace with us, if we were caſt in the primitive mould f godlineſs; but when we caſt godlineſs in a ould of our own apprehenſion, they cannot chuſe ut a miſerable confuſion and diſorder will follow n the duties of religion; for according as our fan-y and inclination impoſes a neceſſity upon things, o we do purſue them, and not according to the eal weight that is in them, I find the ſcripture ying moſt weight upon the moſt common hings, placing moſt religion in the moſt obvious nd known things, and for other things more re-note from common capacity, I find them ſet far elow in the point of worth and moment, even hoſe things that ſeem leaſt. But I find that order uite perverted in the courſe of chriſtians, ſome articular points that are not ſo obvious to every nderſtanding, are put in the firſt place, and ade the diſtinguiſhed character of a chriſtian; nd others again in which true and undefiled re-gion doth more conſiſt, are deſpiſed and ſet in a w place, becauſe of their ceremonies. I think is apoſtle hath obſerved this confuſion, and hath pplied himſelf to remove it, by correcting the iſapprehenſions of chriſtians, and reducing their oughts and ways to the frame of true chriſtianity. Even as Chriſt dealt with the *Phariſees*, who

brought

brought in such a confusion in religion, by im-
posing a necessity upon ceremonies, and an in-
differency upon the very substance itself; truly I
think it may be said unto us, *You tithe mint, an-
nise, and cummin, and pass over judgment and the
Love of God: these things ye ought to have done,
and not to leave the other undone. Ye neglect the
weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy,
faith and truth, and in the room of these ye have
misplaced things that are higher in God's esteem
from an apprehension of their necessity. Thus by
your traditions and opinions of things so remote from
the kingdom of God, ye have made the unquestionable
commandments of God of none effect*, Matth. xv. 6.
You think possibly, if this Apostle was coming out
to preach unto you this day, that he would cer-
tainly resolve you in many controverted points,
and would bring some further light to the de-
bates of the time. But truly I think if he knew
the temper of our spirits, he would preach over
this sermon to us again. *My brethren be not many
masters &c.* I suppose he would bring that old
primitive light of pure and undefiled religion,
the splendour of which our present ways and
courses could not endure, but would be constrain-
ed to hide themselves in darkness; what would
you think of such a sermon as this, *If any man
among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his
tongue, this man's religion is in vain*. Jam. i. 2.
*If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect
man*, Jam. iii. 2. This is accounted a common
and trivial purpose, but believe it sirs, the Chri-
stian practice of the most common things, has
more religion in it, than the knowledge of the
profoundest things, and till you learn to do what
you know, it is a mockery to study to know more.

her what to do. There is a ſtrange ſtirring of
hind after more light and knowledge in ſome
articulars of the time, but I would fain know, if
here be as much ardour and endeavour to prac-
ſe that which we have already, to him that hath
all be given; to him that makes uſe of his know-
dge for the honour of God, and the good of
ankind, and their edification, more ſhall be gi-
en, but from him that hath not, ſhall be taken
way even that which he hath, and yet really
nd cordially he hath not, becauſe he hath no uſe
ſ it, therefore he may by inquiry find more dark-
eſs; but his old light ſhall rather be put out.
o you not all know, that ye ſhould bridle your
ngues, that it is a great point of that chriſtian
ctory over the world to tame and danton that
ndantoned wild beaſt, to quench that fire-brand
hell? Do ye not all know, that we ſhould be
wift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, and ſlow to wrath;
nd as the apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaks on another ſubject,
oth not even nature itſelf teach you when you
ve but one tongue, and two ears, that ye ſhould
ar much, and ſpeak little? Are not your ears
pen, and our tongue incloſed and ſhut up, to
ach us to be more ready to hear than to ſpeak,
ow I ſay till chriſtians learn to practice theſe
ings that are without all controverſy, you may
ake it your account never to want controverſy,
nd never to get clearneſs; for to what purpoſe
ould more light be revealed, when that which
revealed is to no purpoſe.

But it is in vain to think to reform the tongue,
you have the heart firſt reformed; they ſay
belly hath no ears, truly the tongue is all
ngue, and has no ears to take an admonition
inſtruction, we muſt then with the Apoſtle
ire unto the heart, and abate from the abun-

dance

hence of the ſuperfluity and naughtineſs that is within; and therefore our Apoſtle deſcends to the cure of pride, envy and ſtrife in the heart, that are fountains of all that peſtiferous flood, which flows out of every man's mouth. *Is there a wiſe man among you? &c.* And indeed this is the orderly proceeding both of nature and grace, nature begins within to probe among the ſuperfluous and noiſom humours which abound in the body, and deſolate the members, and doth not think it ſufficient to apply external plaiſters. Grace must begin within too to purge the heart, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaks, the eye looks, and the feet walks. If there be no deſtroyer in the members or outward man, it is not the preſcribing of rules and cautions that will ſuffice to reſtrain, to abate, or to cure, but the diſeaſe muſt be ripped up to the bottom, the cauſe found within, as our Apoſtle doth here, hence ſays he proceeds all theſe feverish diſtempers among you, your hot and paſſionate words, your evil ſpeakings and reproachings, your contentions and wars about matters either civil or religious, whence are all theſe, from a vain perſwaſion of wiſdom, from a fooliſh imagination of ſome excellency in yourſelves, and ſome inward affection to be accounted ſomething of among men. *Who is a wiſe man, &c.* you would be accounted wiſe, and ſo you do account yourſelves, and this begets ſtrife, and envy in the heart, and diſpoſeth the mind to ſtrife and contention with others. And therefore he takes the curſe off by decyphering the very nature of ſuch a wiſdom, he embowels that pretended wiſdom in religion and gives it its own name, and becauſe things are beſt known, and moſt livelily comprehended in their oppoſition and comparison with one another, he ſhews wherein true

om and religion conſiſts, and ſets the one againſt
e other, that the deformity of the one, and the
auty of the other may appear. We ſhall then
eak a word of this that is ſuppoſed; and then of
at which is expreſſed, the deſcriptions of true
ſdom, and pretended wiſdom. I conceive this
terrogation, *Is there a wiſe man among you?* im-
rts chiefly theſe two, one is, That it is the na-
ral diſeaſe of all men to eſteem themſelves ſome-
ing, and deſire to be eſteemed ſuch by others;
other is, That the miſapprehenſion of that
erein true wiſdom and excellency doth eſpecially
nſiſt, is the ground of many miſcarriages in the
king or venting of that.

It was an ancient remark, *That vain man would
wiſe, though he be born like a wild aſſe's colt*;
pty man is wiſe in his own eyes, and would be
in other mens too; he hath no reality nor ſoli-
y, but is like theſe light things which the wind
ries away, or the waters bear above, and toſſes
her and thither; yet he apprehends ſome ſolid
d real worth in himſelf, and would impoſe that
prehenſion upon others. And truly this is a
nkenneſs of mind, which makes a man light
d vain, to ſtagger to and fro; it is a giddineſs of
it, that makes him inconſtant and reeling, but
enſible of it. Though he be born as ſtupid and
d of any real wiſdom and excellency, as a wild
's colt, yet he hath this madneſs and folly ſu-
added to all that natural ſtupidity, that he ſeems
be wiſe and underſtanding; and truly it was a
re ancient diſeaſe than Job's days, we may trace
ſteps of its antiquity to be from the very begin-
g, and there we ſhall find the true original of
What was it I pray you, did caſt the angels
of heaven, down to the loweſt hell, to be re-
ed in chains for everlaſting darkneſs? I do not

conceive what their natures ſo abſtracted from ſenſual luſts could be capable of, but this ſpirit darkneſs and madneſs of ſelf-conceit, and an ambitious aſpiring after more wiſdom; whence flow that malecontent and envious humour, in maligning the happineſs of man. And this was the poiſon that Satan the chief of theſe angels did drop into man's nature, by temptations and ſuggeſtions of an imaginary wiſdom and happineſs; *You ſhall be as gods, knowing good and evil.* And truly this poiſon is ſo ſtrong and peſtilent, that having once entered into the body, it ſpreads through all the members; it infects all the poſterity that were in Adam's loins. Being once diſtilled into the lump it diffuſes itſelf through the whole, ſuch a ſtrange contagion is it; that wretched aim at a higher wiſdom, hath thrown us all down into this brutiſh and ſtupid condition, to be like wild aſſes colts. This falſe and fond imagination of wiſdom and excellence, remains within us, which is ſo much the nearer madneſs, that now there is no apparent ground left for ſuch a fairly. And if one of a dwarf bit's height, ſhould imagine himſelf as tall as a mountain, and accordingly labours to ſtretch himſelf, we would ſeek no other ſign of madneſs: truly this malignant and poiſonable humour is ſo ſubtile, that it hath inſinuated itſelf into all the parts and powers of the ſoul, and ſteals in with obſervation into all our thoughts, purpoſes, affections, ways, and courſes; it is of ſo infectious a peſtiferous a nature, that it defiles all that is in man, and all that comes out of the man.

The Apoſtle ſpeaks of covetouſneſs, *that it is the root of all evil*; truly I think that comprehends many inordinate affections in it. Now both this love and earth-love, which ariſes from ſome falſe imagination of that which is not; whether it be

imagination of ſome excellency in ourſelves, or ſome worth in theſe worldly and earthly things, man firſt makes a god of it, and then worſhips it. Therefore covetouſneſs is called idolatry, ſelf-idolatry, and earth-idolatry. We firſt attribute ſome divinity to ourſelves, like theſe people, Iſa. xliv. 17. to their idols, we then fall down and worſhip ourſelves; but we do not conſider in our heart, that we are but duſt: and then we aſcribe ſome divinity to the periſhing things of the world, and then worſhip them; but do not conſider that they are earthly and periſhing vanities. *Thus we feed upon aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned us aſide, and we cannot deliver our own ſouls, by diſcovering the lie that is in our right hand.* We feed partly on the element of the air, by ſeeking that of others, that we have of ourſelves; and partly upon the element of the earth, by the love of this world, and theſe two degenerated evils, are the root of all evils, ſelf-eſtimation, and creature-affection.

I think this Apoſtle in this one word, *Is there any wiſe man among you*, or any endowed with knowledge? and that word glory not, ſtrikes at the root of all the forementioned, and aftermentioned evils; from whence I ſay doth that promptitude and benſal to ſpeak, that ſlowneſs and difficulty to hear, that readineſs and inclination to hide reproved, James i. 19, 20. proceed? Is it not from an overweening conceit of our own wiſdom, that we are ſo ſwift to ſpeak, and ſo ſlow to hear, and that we would teach others, and yet be taught of none? We are ſo much in love with our own apprehenſions, that we imagine they ſhall find as much eſteem and affection among men, and we being like barrels full of liquor in our own conceit, we are like to burſt, if we vent not, and are uncapable of taking from others, as of retaining

what is within. The word of God was a fire in *Jeremiah's* heart, that would have conſumed him, if he had not given it vent. Truly ſelf-love is a fire that muſt vent one way or other, or it would burn up all within, by diſpleaſure, and then it is the over-apprehenſion of ſome excellency in ourſelves, which ſo diſpoſes us to anger, that makes us combuſtible matter, like the ſpirit of gun-powder; for the leaſt ſpark of injury, or offence, will ſet all in a flame. It is certainly the fond imagination of ſome great worth in ourſelves, that is the very immediate prediſpoſition to the apprehenſion of an injury. Humility cannot be affronted, it is hard to perſuade of an injury; why, becauſe there is no excellency to be hurt or wronged; therefore Chriſt conjoins theſe, *meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. xi. 29. lays poverty of ſpirit down as the foundation of meekneſs, Matth. v. 3, 4, 5. Whence is it, that we accept of mens perſons by judging according to the outward appearance, and are ſo ready to diſpleaſe our brethren, eſpecially theſe who are inferior to us in body, or mind, or eſtate, is it not from this root ſelf-admiration? This makes us elevate ourſelves above others, and to intrude ourſelves among theſe who are chiefeſt in account. Whence doth our unmercifulneſs, and rigidity towards other men proceed, but from this fountain? That we allow ſo much licence and indulgence to ourſelves, that we can have none to ſpare for others; and that we do not conſider that we ourſelves ſtand in need of more mercy from God, and cannot endure a mixture of judgment in it; therefore we have judgment to others without mercy, James ii. 13. And is not this ſelf pleaſing humour the fountain of that contentious plea after the pre-eminence, and cenſorious liberty of judging others and uſurping authority over them? James iii.

My brethren, be not ye many maſters, truly this is the root of all contentions and ſtrifes, it is this which rents all human and Chriſtian ſociety; this looſes all the pins of concord and unity; this ſets all by the ears, and makes all the wheels reel through other. The conceit of ſome worth beyond others, and the imagination of ſome preeminence over them, even in the beſt creatures, he beſt, and the beſt, that is the plea; he greateſt, and he greatſt, that is the controverſy; as bladders puffed up with wind,, they cannot be kept in little room, but every one preſſes another, but if the wind were out, they would compact in leſs room, and comply better together. The Apoſtle implies this, when he puts every man in mind of his own failing, *in many things we offend all*; and if this were conſidered, it would abate our ſecurity, and cool our heat and fervour, and moderate our rigour towards others. There would not be ſuch ſtrife about places of power and truſt, if we were not ſwelled in our own apprehenſions to ſome eminency. And is not this the very fountain which ſends out all theſe bitter ſtreams of the tongue, theſe evilſpeakings one of another; theſe ſharp and immoderate cenſures of our neighbours; truly this is it, every man accounts himſelf to be wiſer, and more religious than his brother, to have more knowledge, and ſo he cannot endure any difference in opinion; to have more holineſs, and ſo he cannot bear any infirmity in practice. But the way to help this, would be to humble ourſelves before God, James iv. 10. lowlineſs and meekneſs are the ground ones of theſe Chriſtian virtues which preſerve Chriſtian-ſociety, Eph. iv. 23. And is not this I ſay you, the foundation of wars, ſtrifes, contenſions and jealouſies? *From whence come wars and fightings among you*, is it not from theſe imperious

luſts which war in our members? *Only from pride cometh contention*, Prov. xiii. 20. the head-ſpring of all envy, alſo iſſues out from pride; and this divides in many ſtreams and waters, all our courſes and ways, with putrified and peſtilent corruptions; while every man hath this opinion of himſelf, all is done in ſtrife, no condeſcendence, no ſubmiſſion one to another, Phil. ii. 3. While all make themſelves the center, it cannot otherwiſe happen, but deſigns, courſes, thoughts, and ways, muſt interfere and jar among themſelves; ſelf-ſeeking puts all by the ears, as you ſee children among themſelves, if an apple be caſt to them. Any bait or advantage of the times yokes them in that childiſh contention, who ſhall have it, all come, ſtrive, and fight about it, and it is but a few can have it, and theſe that get it cannot keep it long, others will catch it from them. Now what vain things are theſe, which can neither be gotten, nor kept, but by ſtrife? Oh that we could ſeek better things, which may be both fought and kept, without emulation or ſtrife.

Now the other thing is, that the miſapprehenſion of that wherein true excellence conſiſts is the ground of many evils: *Who is a wiſe man?* &c. You all affect the title, and ye ſeek the thing, as ye ſuppoſe; but alas ye miſtake that wherein it conſiſts; truly there is in all men (ever ſince we taſted of the tree of knowledge of good and evil) a ſtrange innate deſire of knowledge, and affectation of wiſdom and deſire of excellence; but ſince the firſt endeavour in Paradiſe ſucceeded ill, there hath nothing gone well ſince: we weary ourſelves to catch vanities, ſhadows, and lies. *How long, O ye ſons of men will ye love vanity, and follow after lies?* The divinely taught prophet could not but pity the children of men: and as Paul ſpeaks to the Athenians of another purpoſe, *Him whom ye ignorantly wor-*

ſhip

hip, we ſhew unto you; ſo he declares unto men hat which they ignorantly and vainly ſeek elſe-where. This I aſſure you conſiſts in this, *that ye hew out of a good converſation your works with eekneſs and wiſdom.*

All our miſchief proceeds from this, that we iſapprehend and miſtake that which we would adly have, and ſo once being in the wrong way, hat cannot lead to our purpoſed end, ſo the faſter e run, the further we go from it; the more we ove in affection and diligence, the leſs we indeed romove in reality to the attaining what we ſeek, ow greatly have we fallen: I might inſtance this many things, but I ſhall be content with theſe wo. There is a deſire in all men after happineſs, ut there is a fundamental error in the imagination, uppoſing it to conſiſt in the enjoyment of tempo-al pleaſure, honour, advantage, or the ſatisfaction f our own natural inclinations. Now this leads all ankind to a purſuit after theſe things; but how aſe a ſcent is it? and how vain a purſuit is it? or the faſter they move in that way, the further hey are from all ſolid and true contentment. A-ain in all godly men, there is ſomething of this ectified, and they ſuppoſe religion to be the only rue wiſdom, and this wiſdom, the only true hap-ineſs; but oftentimes there are even miſtakes in hat too; as many of the world call *ſweet bitter, nd bitter ſweet*, becauſe of the vitiated and cor-upted pallate, ſo the godly being in ſome mea-ure diſtempered, calls that which is not ſo ſweet weeteſt, and that which is not ſo bitter, bittereſt; hey change the value of things, and miſplace them ut of that order in which God hath ſet them. One reat miſtake is this, we impoſe a great deal of weight nd moment upon theſe things in religion, which re but the hay and ſtubble, or pins in the build-

ing, and we esteem less that wherein the foundation and substance of true religion consists. We have an over-apprehension of a profession, and an undervaluing thought of practice; we overstretch some points of knowledge, and truth of the least value, and have less value for the fundamental statutes of the gospel, faith and love, mercy, and judgment. This our Saviour reproved in the *Pharisees*, *I will have mercy* (says God) *and not sacrifice*; a ceremony of opinion in some particulars of the time hath more necessity with us than the practice of true godliness: and this is the root of the most part of these *vain janglings*, *strifes of words*, *and perverse disputings of men*, *whereof cometh envy*, *strife*, *malice*, *evil surmisings*, and no edification in faith and love, which were so frequent in the primitive times, and so often hammered down by *Paul*. This is it, a misapprehension of the value of them. Fancy imposes a worth and necessity upon them; but *Paul* doth always oppose unto them true godliness, 1 Tim. vi. 3. chap. iv. 7. and prescribes that as the cure, that true godliness in practice of what we know, and charity towards our brethren may be bigger in our apprehension, and higher in our affection. Would ye then know, my brethren, wherein true religion consists, and wherein genuine Christianity stands, it is "in shewing out of a good "conversation, our works with meekness and wis-"dom." I reduce it to these two words, in joining practice to knowledge, and meekness to both, and this makes our religion to shine before men, and glorify our heavenly Father.

Wherein then do ye think this mystery of wisdom which the gospel reveals consists? Not in the profound and abstracted speculations of God, or the secrets of nature; a work about which learned men have racked their inventions, and beaten their brains

brains to no other purpoſe, than the diſcovery of the greatneſs of man's ignorance. It doth not conſiſt in the ſounding of the depths of divinity, and looſing all theſe perplexed knots of queſtions, and doubts, which are moved upon the ſcripture, in all which men really bewray their own ignorance and miſery. *The world by wiſdom knew not God*, living right is the firſt point of true wiſdom, which coſts many men great expences to learn, to know their own folly, *to become fools, that they may become wiſe*, 1 Cor. iii. 18. man became a fool by ſeeking to become wiſer than God made him; and that is all the reſult of our endeavours after wiſdom ſince, Rom. i. 22. But here is the great inſtruction of Chriſtianity, to bring men down low from the height of preſumption, and ſelf-eſtimation, and make him ſee himſelf juſt as he is by nature, a fool, and a wild aſſe's colt. *Nebuchadnezzar* had much ado to learn this leſſon, it coſt him ſome years brutality to learn to know his brutiſhneſs, and when that was known, then his underſtanding returned to him.

Now this is the firſt and hardeſt point of wiſdom, when it is once learned and imprinted on the heart, O what a docility is in the mind to more, what readineſs to receive what follows? It makes a man a weaned child, a little ſimple child, tractable and and flexible as Chriſt would have all his diſciples. A man thus emptied and vacuated of ſelf-conceit, theſe lines of natural pride, being blotted out, the ſoul is as a *Tabula raſa*, an unwritten table, to receive any impreſſion of the law of God, that he pleaſes to put on it; and then his words are all *plain to him that underſtandeth, and right to them that find knowledge*, Prov. viii. 9. Then I ſay it is not difficult to underſtand, and *to prove what is the good and acceptable will of God*, Rom. xii. 2. Eph.

v. 10----17. It is not up unto heaven, that thou shouldeſt ſay, who ſhall aſcend to bring it down? neither is it far down in the depth, that thou ſhouldeſt ſay, who ſhall deſcend and bring it up from hence? But it is near thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, &c. Rom. x. 6, 7, 8. *He hath ſhewed thee O man what is good, and what is required of thee, to do juſtly, to ſhew mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*, Micah vi. 8. There is the plain ſign of Chriſtian wiſdom, the abridgement of all that is taught in the ſchool of Chriſt; here is the courſe of moral philoſophy, *the grace of God hath appeared, to teach us to deny ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this world.* And when the ſcholar is brought along by these degrees, he is at length laureated in that great day of our Saviour's appearance, then he hath the degree of glory and immortality conferred upon him. He is a canditate of immortality and felicity, Tit. ii. 12, 13.

We are in the Chriſtian ſchool like many ſcholars who labour to know ſo many things, that indeed they know nothing well; as the ſtomach that devours much meat, but digeſts little, and turns it not into food and aliment, incorporates it not into the body. We catch at many great points of truth, and we really drink in none of them; we let not them ſink into the heart, and turn into affection and practice. This is the grand diſeaſe of the time, to ſtudy to know many things, and no ſtudy to live what we know, or practiſe any thing: the Chriſtian world is all in a flame, and the church is rent aſunder by the eager purſuit and perſecution of ſome points of truth; and this is the clamour of all, Who will ſhew us our light? Who will diſcover ſome new thing unto us? But in the mean time we do not prove the unqueſtionable acceptable will

our God; like a faſtidious ſqueamiſh ſtomach, at loaths what it receives, and always longs for mething elſe. Thus the evil is vented here, *Who a wiſe man* do ye think? Not he who knows ma- things, who hath ſtill a will to controverſy, who th attained ſome further light than others of em; not ſo brethren, but he that *ſhews out of a od converſation, his works with meekneſs of wiſdom;* that proves and practiſeth as well as knows, the od-will of God. *For hereby do we know that we ow him, if we keep his commandments. He that ith, I know him, and keeps not his commandments, a liar, and the truth is not in him,* 1 John ii. 3, This proves that knowledge is not in the head, t in the heart, and that it is not captivated and ut up in the mind, but that a man is delivered up a captive to the truth, Rom. vi. 16.

All men complain of the want of light and know- dge, though perhaps none think they have much: t is the will of God ſo dark and intricate? Is it hard to underſtand? Truly it is plain, *He hath ewed thee what is good,* he hath ſhewed thee what do; but that thou neglects to do, and therefore en know not what to do further? Do ye not all ow that ye ſhould walk ſoberly, righteouſly and ouſly, and humble yourſelves to walk with God, d in lowlineſs of mind each ſhould eſteem ano- er better than himſelf; ye ſhould forbear and rgive one another, as God for Chriſt's ſake hath rgiven you; ye ſhould not ſeek great things for urſelves, eſpecially when God is plucking up at he hath planted, and caſting down what was ilt: ye ſhould mind your country above more, d live as ſojourners here. Are not theſe words of ſdom all plain and obvious to the meaneſt capa- y? Now my beloved, with what face can ye ſeek ore knowledge of God, or enquire for more light

into

into his mind, when you do not prove that know and perfect will of his, when you do not occup your present talent, why do ye seek more? *To hi that hath shall be given*, truly it is the man tha fears and obeys as far as is revealed, to whom Go shews his secret, and teaches the way he shou choose, Psal. xxv. 12. I know not a readier wa to be resolved in doubtful things, than to studi obedience in these things that are beyond all doubt to walk in the light received, is the high way t more light. But what hope is there of any mor light from the Lord, when our ways and course and dispositions, and practices, even in our ende vours after more knowledge, cannot endure th light of that shining will of God, that is alread revealed. In ordering our conversation, we cate at the shadow of our points of truth, and lose th substance that was in our hands, lowliness, meek ness, charity, long-suffering, sobriety of mind, an actions, and heavenly mindedness; all these sub stantials we let go, that we may get hold of some empty unedifying notions; we put out our candle that is already enlightned, that is the knowledge o good conversation, that we may seek more light and that is the way to find darkness and delusion *because they received not the truth in love, that they might be saved, God gave them up to strong delusions and the belief of lies*, 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11. There i the ground of delusions, truth received, but no loved, or obeyed; many things known, but th stamp and seal not impressed on the heart, we ex press in the conversation; therefore God is provok ed to put out that useless light of truth, and deliv that man captive to delusions, who would not de liver his soul a captive to truth: And is not th righteousness, that he who detained the know truth in unrighteousness of affection, and conver

sation,

tion, be himſelf detained, and incarcerated by rong deluſions of mind and imagination.

As a good converſation, and good works, ſhould joined to knowledge, and meekneſs muſt be the nament of both; this meekneſs of wiſdom is the eat leſſon, that the Wiſdom of the Father came wn to teach man, *Learn of me, for I am meek,* d truly the meekneſs of that ſubſtantial Wiſdom God Jeſus Chriſt, is the exact pattern and copy, d the moſt powerful motive, and conſtraint to is kindneſs of Chriſtian wiſdom. Our Saviour did not cry, nor lifted up his voice in the ſtreets," he ade little noiſe, nor cried with pomp, he was t rigorous, nor rigid upon ſinners; though he was oppreſſed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth, being reviled, he reviled not again; being curſed, he bleſſed;" though he could have gions of angels at his command, yet he would ſhew ther an example of patience and meekneſs to his llowers, than overcome his enemies. If many of , who pretend to be his diſciples, had the winds, ins, heavens, and elements at their command- ent, I fear we would have burned up the world; e would preſently have called for fire from hea- n, to devour all whom we conceived enemies to m, or ourſelves, and that under the notion of al. Zeal it is indeed, but ſuch as is ſpoken of in e next verſe, *If ye have bitter envying* (the word bitter zeal) *in your hearts, glory not, nor lie againſt e truth.* Chriſt's zeal was ſweet zeal; it might ell conſume or eat him up within, but it did not vour others without, *the zeal of thy houſe* (ſays) *hath eaten me up.* But our zeal is like the Ba- lonian furnace that burnt and conſumed theſe at went to throw the pious children into it; at e firſt approaching it gets without the chimney, d devours all around it. If the meekneſs or gen-

tleneſs

tleneſs of a perſon who received the greateſt inju-
ries that ever any received, and to whom the
greateſt indignities were done, and who endured
the greateſt contradiction of ſinners, if his calm
compoſed temper do not ſoften our ſpirits, mitigate
our ſharpneſs, and allay our bitterneſs, I know not
what can do it. I do not think but if any man con-
ſidered how much long-ſuffering God exerciſeth
towards him, how gentle and patient he is, after
ſo many provocations; how Jeſus Chriſt doth ſtill
forgive infinite numbers of infinite wrongs done to
his grace, how ſlow he is to wrath, and eaſy to be
entreated, ſurely ſuch a man would abate much of
his ſeverity towards others; he would purſue peace
with all men, and eſteem little of wrongs done
unto him, and not think them worthy of remem-
brance, he would not be eaſily provoked, but he
would be eaſily pacified. In a word, he could not
but exerciſe ſomething of that gentleneſs and meek-
neſs in forbearing, and forgiving, as Chriſt also
forgave him: and truly there is no ornament of a
man like that of a meek and quiet ſpirit, 1 Pet. iii.
4. it is both comely and precious, it is of great
price in God's ſight, it is a ſpirit all compoſed and
ſettled, all peace and harmony within: it is like
the heavens in a clear day, all ſerene and beauti-
ful; whereas an unmeek ſpirit is for the moſt part
like the troubled ſea, toſſed with tempeſts, winds
and daſhed with rains: even at the beſt it is but
troubled with itſelf, when there is no external pro-
vocation, it hath an inward unreſt in its boſom
and caſts out mire and dirt. Meekneſs is ſo beſeem-
ing every man, that its even humanity itſelf. It is
the very nature of a man reſtored, and theſe brutiſh
wild and ſavage diſpoſitions put off. Meekneſs is a
man in the true likeneſs of God; but paſſion and
the evils which accompany it, is a man metamor-
phoſed,

hoſed, and transformed into the nature of a beaſt, nd that of a wild beaſt too. It hath been always eckoned that anger is nothing different from mad- eſs, but in the continuance of it, it is a ſhort mad- eſs; but what is wanting in the continuance is nade up in the frequency: when ſpirits are in- lined to it, there is a habitual fury and madneſs n ſuch ſpirits: it is no wonder then, theſe are con- bined, meekneſs and wiſdom, for truly they are nſeparable, meekneſs dwells in the boſom of wiſ- om: it is nothing elſe but wiſdom, reaſon and eligion ruling all within, and compoſing all the iſtempered luſts and affections; *but anger reſts in he boſoms of fools*, it cannot get reſt but in a fool's oſom, for where it enters wiſdom and reaſon muſt o out, Eccleſ. vii. 9 *A fool's wrath is preſently nown*, Prov. xii. 16. For if there were ſo much rue and ſolid wiſdom as to examine the matter irſt, and to conſider before we ſuffer ourſelves to e provoked, we would certainly quench anger in he very firſt ſmoking of an apprehenſion of a wrong, we would immediately caſt it out; for here is nothing ſo much blinds and dimneth the eye of our underſtanding, and when this groſs va- pour riſes out of the dunghill of our luſts, nothing ſo much uncovers our ſhame and nakedneſs. A pru- dent man covereth ſhame, but haſtineſs and bitter- neſs takes the garment off our infirmity, and expoſes us to mockery and contempt, Prov. xii. 16. There s not a greater evidence of a ſtrong ſolid ſpirit, han this, to be able to govern this unruly paſſion, whereas it is taken far otherwiſe; meekneſs is con- ſtrued by ſome to be ſimplicity, and weakneſs; and many imagine ſome greatneſs and height of ſpirit, in the hotter natures, but truly it is far otherwiſe; *For he that is ſlow to anger, is better than the migh- ty, and he that ruleth his own ſpirit, than he that*

takes

takes a city. Wrath is an impotency and weakneſ
it hath no ſtrength in it, but ſuch as ye would fin
in madmen: but this is true magnanimity, to over
come thyſelf, and *overcome evil with good*.

As there is nothing which is a greater evidenc
of wiſdom, ſo there is nothing a better help to tru
wiſdom than this; for a meek ſpirit is like a cle
running fountain, that ye ſee the bottom of; bu
a paſſionate ſpirit is like a troubled fountain, th
ſhadow of truth cannot be ſeen in it: a glaſs tha
is pure and cleanly, renders the image lively; bu
if it be beſmeared with duſt, you can ſee nothing
ſo is a compoſed mild ſpirit apt to diſcern the truth
without prejudice; and indeed it is the meek whom
God engages to teach his ways, Pſal. xxv. 8, 9.
He that receives with meekneſs the ingrafted word
is in the readieſt capacity to receive more; when
the ſuperfluity of naughtineſs is caſt out, and all
the faculties of the ſoul compoſed to quietneſs and
calmneſs; there his voice will beſt be heard, and
himſelf readieſt to receive it. Our affection keeps a
continual hurry within the tumultuous noiſe of our
diſordered luſts, that are always raging and con-
trouling the voice of God; ſo that we cannot hear
his teaching. A paſſionate temper of ſpirit is very
indocile, there are ſo many loud ſounds of preju-
dices within, that the truth cannot be heard: but
a meek ſpirit hath all quietneſs and ſilence, as *Cor-
nelius* and his houſe had waiting for the mind of
the Lord. And ſuch he delights to converſe with
moſt, and reveal moſt unto; for it gets readieſt
entertainment. Let me tell you beloved in the
Lord, you diſoblige the Lord (if I may ſpeak ſo)
and hinder him to reveal any more of his mind to
you, ye diſengage him to teach you his way in thoſe
dark and untrodden paths, becauſe ye do not ſtudy
this meekneſs in the wiſdom and knowledge ye
have

ge already, nor his meekneſs and moderation in
king further knowledge: and it is no wonder he
provoked by it, to chooſe your deluſions, be-
uſe it is certainly theſe graces of meekneſs, cha-
y, patience, gentleneſs, long-ſuffering, humble-
s of mind, and ſuch like, which go always in a
ain together: Theſe are an ornament of grace
on the head, and a crown of glory, and that
ain about the neck *Solomon* mentions, Prov. iv.
Now when you caſt off your crown of glory,
ur nobleſt ornament, your chain of dignity,
uld he give ſuch precious pearls to ſwine? When
u trample under foot the greater commandments
mercy, judgment, ſobriety, humility, meekneſs
d charity; ſhould he reveal leſſer commandments,
diſcover his will in leſſer matters? Conſider the
nner of expreſſion here, *Let him ſhew forth out*
good converſation, &c. Truly it is good works
h meekneſs of wiſdom; it is a good converſa-
n, with a true profeſſion, that ſhews forth a
riſtian, and ſhews him moſt before men. *Let*
r light (ſays Chriſt) *ſo ſhine before men.* What
he ſhining beauty of Chriſtian light? It is the
rks of piety, charity, equity, and ſobriety, theſe
rify the Father, and beautify all his children.
u may eaſily conceive what that is, that chiefly
mmends religion to the ignorant world, is it not
meekneſs of Chriſtian wiſdom? Is it not this
mleſs ſimplicity, that divine-like candour, that
aes in every true Chriſtian? Will rigidity ſeve-
, paſſion, blood, violence, perſecution, and ſuch
, ever conciliate the hearts of men. Have ſuch
ſons any beauty, any light in them, except a
rching conſuming light? The light of a good
riſtian, is like the light of the ſun, of a ſweet,
ntle and refreſhing nature, conveying influence
ll, doing good to the houſhold of faith. *Paten*

will tell you what that is, that will moſt eng
the hearts of the world, to a reverend eſteem
true religion, 1 Pet. ii. 12. it is a *converſation*
neſt, and void of offence, giving to every one th
own due, honouring all men, loving the brotherh
not uſing our liberty for a cloak of maliciouſneſs,
not overſtretching it, to the looſing of other
tural or civil bands. When men ſee Chriſtian
making us do that really and chearfully, wh
even nature itſelf teacheth all to do, that ma
the light of it ſhining and beautiful. Is not th
higher myſteries of faith, than ſome conceive?
is not other points of truth and profeſſion, t
are either above natural reaſon, or ſeem ſometh
oppoſite to it, that can engage natural beh
ers; and far leſs the proſecution of a tempo
worldly intereſt of the people of God, to the
ſtruction of all oppoſite to it, at leaſt to the dim
niſhing of all other mens gain and advantage, t
engroſſing of all earthly privileges into the hands
ſaints; that is ſuch a thing, that never entred in
the heart of the ſhining lights of the primiti
times: O how doth the ſtream of their exhortatio
run croſs to this notion! I am ſure there is nothi
in its own nature, ſuch a ſtumbling-block to t
world, or repreſents religion ſo odious and abom
nable to other men, as when it ſtands in the wa
and intercepts all theſe natural immunities or p
vileges of life, or eſtate. This makes natural m
to hate it, even at a diſtance, and become irreco
cileable enemies unto it; ſince it will not let the
live by it, they are engaged not to let it live
them. I wiſh indeed all the places of power an
truſt in every nation, were in the hands of god
men, not ſo much for the intereſt of the godly,
for the publick intereſt; becauſe *men fearing Go*
and hating covetouſneſs, can only rule juſtly a
con

mfortably: but to monopolize all power and
ſt to ſuch a particular judgment, and way (as it
now given out, is truly I think inhuman, and
chriſtian: theſe deſerve not power and truſt who
uld ſeek it, and engroſs it wholly to themſelves.
t there is another thing which ſavours greatly of
fleſh, at leaſt of that ſpirit which Chriſt reprov-
in his diſciples, to take away mens lives, liber-
and livelihood given by their Creator, upon
ery foot of oppoſition, and enmity to our way
d intereſt. Is this to love our enemies, bleſſing
em that curſe us, or praying for them that de-
tefully uſe us, or perſecute us? Let us remember
are Chriſtians, and this is the rule of Chriſtia-
y, that ſtops even the mouth of adverſaries. But
me ſtill find an evaſion for this, they will ſay they
God's enemies, and not my particular enemies
ly: But I pray you were not the enemies of
riſtians in theſe days, more properly enemies to
riſt than now? For they had nothing then to
rſecute them for, but the very profeſſion of that
me; and truly I confeſs in our days, we make
ore particular enemies, by particular injuries and
ſobligements, than either our profeſſion or prac-
e of religion make: but to put it out of all doubt,
learn that they are perſecutors, and do all man-
r of evil againſt us, for Chriſt's name ſake. I
ve ſaid this, becauſe I know nothing that more
rkneth and obſcures religion, nor ſuch worldly
d temporal intereſts, ſo eagerly purſued, and no-
ing makes it more to ſhine among men, than a
od converſation with meekneſs of wiſdom.

SERMON V.

James iii. 14. *But if ye have bitter envying, &c*

THE cunning of Satan, and the deceitfulneſs o our own hearts, is ſuch that when a groſſe temptation will not prevail with conſcience in ſom meaſure enlightned, then they transform them ſelves into angels of light, and deal more ſubtill with us; and there is no greater ſubtilty of Satan nor no ſtronger ſelf deceit, than this to palliate an cover vices with the ſhadow of virtue, and to pre ſent corruptions under the ſimilitude of graces. is common unto all temptations to ſin, to have hook under their bait, to be maſked over wit ſome pleaſure or advantage, or credit; but whe ſuch earthly and carnal pretences do not inſinuat ſtrongly unto a believing heart that has diſcovere the vanity of all that which is in the world, ſo dar not venture upon ſin for all the pleaſures which a tend it, then he winds about and tames and change his likeneſs unto light, conſcience, and duty, pre ſents many works of darkneſs, and corruption un der the notion of duty and honeſty, according a he finds the temper of a man's ſpirit to be: I ca give no inſtance more pregnant, and even commo than this which is given here, viz. contentions an ſtrivings among brethren, bitter envying, malig ning and cenſuring one another, are very manife works of the fleſh, and works of darkneſs, fitte for the night than the day, and for the time o ignorance, nor the time after the clear light hat ſhined. Now if Satan were about to perſuade church or a Chriſtian of this, how do ye think h would go about it? Would he preſent ſome carna advantage to be gained by it, ſome more profit o preferment from it? May be that might be ver

takin

king with ſome more unconſcientious ſelf-ſeeking irits, and I fear it be too much taken with many; t ſure it will not reliſh with every man: it will t entice him that hath the fear of God, and the ve of Jeſus ſtirring within him. Therefore he muſt k about, and find ſome falſe prophet, that may me out in the name of the Lord, and diſguiſe mſelf, and by ſuch means he will do it; let a int of truth or conſcience come in debate, let a tion of religion and one far off from an intereſt Chriſt be in the buſineſs, and then he can take vantage to make a man over-reach himſelf in it. e will preſent the truth as a thing of ſo great eight and conſequence, that he muſt contend for , and empty all his wit and power and parts for : this good intention being eſtabliſhed, he raiſes mens paſſions under a notion of zeal, and theſe ing promoved under that pretence for ſuch an d; whatſoever mean may be ſought profitable r that end, all is choſen and followed without diſ- etion or knowledge of what is good or evil: it apprehended that the good principle of conſci- nce, of duty, and the good intention may juſtify l. And by that means he hath perſuaded the hurches of Chriſt, and the Chriſtian world unto ore rigidity, ſeverity, cruelty, ſtrife, contention, lood, violence, and ſuch works of darkneſs, than eadily have been found in the times of ignorance. Chriſtendom a field of blood, rather than any ther part of the world? Truly this is the reproach Chriſtianity, by this God's name is daily laſphemed. Here our Apoſtle ſets himſelf to un- maſk this angel of light, and to decypher him in is own proper nature and notion. He takes off he vizard of religion and wiſdom, and lets you ſee he very image of hell under it; *But if ye have itter envying and ſtrife, glory not*; ye glory as if

ye had the truth, you glory in your zeal for it, y
boaſt that ye are the wiſe men, the religious me
and ſo you take liberty upon the account of env
to malign, deſpiſe and contend with others: glo
not if you cheriſh ſuch ſtrifes and contentions,
the breach of Chriſtian peace and concord. Y
are liars againſt the truth, which you profeſs,
not think theſe proceed from true zeal; nay, n
it is but bitter envy, and bitter zeal, do not flat
yourſelves with an apprehenſion of wiſdom,
knowledge, or religion, that is wiſdom indee
but mark of what nature, *it is earthy, ſenſual, a*
deviliſh, and indeed that is a fooliſh wiſdom, to ſ
no worſe of it.

You ſee then what need we have of the exhort
tion of the Apoſtle's, Eph. vi. 11. *Put on the wo*
armour of God, that ye may be able to ſtand agai
the wiles of the Devil. Truly we may ſtand agai
his darts, and violent open thruſts at our conſc
ence, when we being ignorant of his devices, an
not acquainted with his depth, 2 Cor. ii. 11. Re
ii. 24. will not be able to ſtand againſt his ways
for we have a great and ſubtile party to wreſt
with, *principalities and powers, and ſpiritual wic*
edneſs in high places, or heavenly things (as ſom
render the word) he exerciſes much wickedne
ſpiritual, inviſible wickedneſs in heavenly and re
ligious things, in which it is hard to wreſtle, unle
we be endowed with faith, knowledge and righte
teouſneſs, and ſhod with the goſpel of peace; th
peaceable goſpel reducing our ſpirits to a peaceab
temper. I conceive there is nothing the world ha
been more abuſed with, than the notion of zea
juſtice, and ſuch like: and there is nothing where
in a Chriſtian is more ready to deceive himſelf tha
this: therefore I conceive the Holy Ghoſt has un
deceived us in this, and hath of purpoſe uſed th
wor

ord zeal as often in a bad ſenſe, as in a good one, d uſually chooſes to expreſs envy and malice by though another word might ſuit as well, and be ore proper; ſo here bitter zeal ζηλος φρονος is reckon- among the works of the fleſh, Gal. v. 20. And we e exhorted to walk *honeſtly as in the day, not in rife and envy*, or zeal; and therefore the Apoſtle ebukes ſharply the *Corinthians, Are ye not carnal, d walk as men, whereas there is among envying,* zeal, *and ſtrife*, 1 Cor. iii. 3. Zeal is a vehe- ency of affection in any earneſt purſuit, or oppo- ion of a thing; and to make it good, it muſt not nly be fixed upon a commendable and good ob- ct, but muſt run in the right channel, between the nks of moderation, charity, and ſobriety: if it o- erflows theſe, certainly that exceſs proceeds not ſim- ly and purely from the love of God, or the truth, but om ſome latent corruption or luſt in our members, hich takes occaſion to ſwell up with it. I find in ripture the true zeal of God hath much ſelf-denial i; it is not exerciſed ſo much concerning a an's own matters, as concerning the matters that e purely and merely concerning God's glory; it the moſt flexible condeſcending and forbearing ing in thoſe things that relate to ourſelves, and ur own intereſts: thus *Moſes* is commended as e meekeſt man, when *Aaron* and *Miriam* raiſe edition againſt him, Num. xii. 3. he had not af- ctions to be commoved upon that account; but ow much is he ſtirred and provoked upon the ap- rehenſion of the manifeſt diſhonour of God, by e peoples idolatry? How many are lions in their wn cauſe, and in God's as ſimple and blunt as ambs? And how much will our ſpirits be com- oved when our own intereſt lies in the buſineſs, nd hath ſome conjunction with God's intereſt; hat if theſe were parted our fervour abates, and

our heat cools. I lay down this then as the fund
mental principle of true zeal, it is like charity th
seeketh not its own things.

But to make the nature of it clear, I give yo
three characters of it; *Verity, charity*, and *impa
tiality* I say it hath truth in it, a good thing f
the object, and knowledge of that good thing i
the subject, for the principle of it; *It is good to
zealously affected always in a good thing*, Gal. iv
18. Zeal in an evil thing, hath something of th
impatient and restless nature of the Devil in it
there is nothing we would be more deliberate an
circumspect in, than what to employ or bestow ou
affections upon. We would have a certain persu
sion of the unquestionable goodness of that whic
we are ardent and vehement to obtain, else th
more ardour and vehemency, the more wickedne
is in it. The Jews had a zeal for God, but not ac
cording to knowledge, and that is a blind impe
tuous self-will; for if a man take a race at his fu
speed in the dark, he cannot but catch a fall: th
eager and hot pursuits of men are founded upo
some gross misapprehensions.

Secondly, There must not only be a goodne
supposed in the object, but some correspondenc
between the worth and weight of that goodnes
and the measure of our desires and affections; el
there wants that conformity between the soul an
truth, which makes a true zeal of God. I mean thi
the soul's most vehement desires should be employ
ed about the chiefest good, and our zeal move i
relation to things unquestionably good, and not a
bout things of small moment, or of little edifica
tion. This is the apostolick rule that not only w
consider, that there be some truth in the thing, bu
that we especially take notice, if there be so muc
truth and goodness as requires such a measure o
vehemenc

hemency and affection. Therefore in leſſer things e ſhould have leſſer commotion, and in greater hings greater, ſuitable to them; otherwiſe the *harisees* who exerciſed their zeal about trifles, and eglected the weightier matters of the law, Matth. xiii. 23. would not have been reproved by Chriſt. nd indeed this is the zeal to which we are reeemed by Chriſt, Tit. ii. 14. *be ye zealous of good orks*, of works that are unqueſtionably good, ſuch s piety, equity, and ſobriety. There is nothing nore incongruous than to ſtrain at a gnat, and wallow a camel, to ſpend the vital ſpirits upon hings of ſmall concernment to our own or others dification, and to have nothing to ſpare for the eightier matters of true godlineſs. It is as if a an ſhould ſtrike a feather or the air with all his ight, he muſt needs wreſt his arms; even ſo to trike with the ſpiritual ſword of our affections, with uch vehemency at the lighter and emptier matters of religion cannot chooſe but to disjoint the ſpirit, nd put it out of courſe; as there is a falſhood in hat zeal that is ſo vehement about a light matter, hough it have ſome good in it; for there is no uitable proportion between the worth of the thing nd the vehemency of the ſpirit: imagination acts n both, in the one it ſuppoſes a goodneſs, and it ollows it; and in the other it impoſes a neceſſity nd a worth far beyond that which it really is, and o raiſes up the ſpirit to that height of neceſſity and worth that hath no being, but in a man's imagination. I think there is no particular that the Apoſtle doth ſo much caveat; for I find in 1 Tim. i. 4. he takes off ſuch endleſs matters that miniſter queſtioning rather than godly edifying, and gives us a better ſubject to emp'oy our zeal upon, ver. 5. the great end and ſum of all religion, love to God and man, proceeding from *a pure heart, a good conſcience*,

ence, and faith unfeigned, from which we muſt nec
ſwerve, when we turn aſide to ſuch empty an
vain janglings, ver. 6. For truly we have but na
row and limited ſpirits, and it muſt needs follo
when we give them very much to one thing, th
they cannot attend another thing ſeriouſly, as Chri
declares, Matth. vi. 24. *no man can ſerve two ma
ſters*, &c. And therefore there is much need
Chriſtian wiſdom to ſingle out and chooſe the mo
proper and neceſſary object; for as much as w
give other things that have not ſo much connexio
with that we take from it as much: and the Apo
ſtle counſels us, 1 Tim. iv. 7. *rather to exerci
ourſelves unto true godlineſs*, and to the moſt ſub
ſtantial things in it, rather than vain things, an
oppoſition of ſcience, Chap. vi. 3, 4, 5, 20. Then
he oppoſes the wholeſome words of Chriſt, and th
doctrine that is according to godlineſs, unto que
ſtions, and *ſtriſes of words, whereof comes envy
railings, evil-ſurmiſings, and perverſe diſputings o
men of corrupt minds*. And it is very obſervable
that he is preſſing the duties of believing ſervant
towards their maſters, whether believers or infi
dels, *that the name of God be not blaſphemed, no
the goſpel evil ſpoken of*; for there is nothing ſo
much expoſes it to miſconſtruction, as when it is
ſtretched and abuſed unto the prejudice of natural
and civil duties: and doubtleſs there would be
many doubts and queſtions about it in theſe days,
ſome contending for worldly pre-eminence over the
Pagans, and ſome for the levelling of all Chriſtians;
but ſays he, *If any man teach otherwiſe*, or contend
about this, *he is proud, knowing nothing*, &c. He
hath forſaken the ſubſtance of true godlineſs, which
conſiſts in good works ſhining before men, and
diſabuſes the notion of Chriſtian liberty to the diſ-
honour of Chriſt, and hath ſuppoſed gain a world-
ly

carnal intereſt of the godly, to be piety, and purſues that fancy of his own. He renews this the ſecond epiſtle, Chap. ii. 14, 15, 16. ſhewg that theſe ſtrifes about words, albeit they ſeem be upon grounds of conſcience at the beginning, t they increaſe unto more ungodlineſs, ver. 23. nd unto Titus he gives the ſame charge very ſomnly, Tit. iii. 8, 9. *I will that thou affirm conntly, that they who believe in God ſhould be reful to maintain good works. But avoid fooliſh d unlearned queſtions*, &c. *For this is a faithful ying.* But again,

Thirdly, Zeal muſt have charity with it, and this l the ſcriptures cited prove; it muſt be ſo temered with love, that it vents not to the breach of hriſtian peace and concord: *Charity envieth not*; r is not zealous; when zeal wants charity, it is ot zeal, but envy. And hence it is that there are o frequent and fervent exhortations to avoid ſuch ueſtions, as may gender ſtrifes, and contentions, nd malice; now certainly there was ſome truth n them, and ſomething of conſcience alſo in them; et he diſſuades intirely the proſecution of them to he rigour, as men are apt to do, but wills us rather to have faith in ourſelves. And truly I think he queſtions that did then ingender ſtrifes, and ent the church, were as much if not more momentuous, nor the moſt part of theſe about which we bite and devour one another. The queſtions of he law, the circumciſion, and eating of things ſacrificed to idols, of things indifferent, lawful, or ot lawful; yet all theſe he would have ſubordinated unto the higher end of the commandment, charity, 1 Tim. i. 4, 5. And when he exhorts the *Corinthians* to be zealous for ſpiritual gifts, yet he would have them excel in theſe things which edify he church, 1 Cor. xiv. 1--12. *Covet earneſtly the*

beſt

beſt gifts, and yet he ſhews them *a more excelle way*, and that is *charity*, 1 Cor. xiii. 1. to do a theſe things for the good and edification of th church, rather than of our own opinion, 1 Cor. xi 3. Chap. xiv. 12. I find where the word zeal taken in a bad ſenſe, it hath theſe works of dar neſs attending it, *wrath*, *ſtrife*, *malice*, &c. Ga v. 20. 1 Cor. iii. 3. Rom. xiii. 23. It is accomp nied with ſuch a helliſh crowd of noiſom luſts. Le me add a differential character of it; it is uncha table, contentious and malicious, it can do nothin condeſcend to nothing, and is converſant abo nothing, but what pleaſes our own humour, fo the peace and unity of the church; it is a ſel willed impetuous thing, like a torrent that carri all down before it. But truly right zeal runs calm ly and conſtantly within the banks, it will rath conſume its own bowels within with grief, tha devour others without.

SERMON VI.

Matth. xi. 28. *Come unto me all ye that labour, an are wearied*, &c.

IT is the great miſery of Chriſtians in this life that they have ſuch poor, narrow, and limited ſpirits, that are not fit to receive the truth of th goſpel in its full comprehenſion; from whenc manifold miſapprehenſions in judgment, and ſtum bling in practice proceeds. The beauty and life o things conſiſts in their intire union with one ano ther, and in the conjunction of all their parts therefore it would not be a fit way to judge of picture by a lineament, or of an harmony by a di crepant, nor of the world by ſome ſmall parcel o it

; but take all the parts together, all the notes and aughts, as conjoined by art in ſuch an order, nd there appears nothing but beauty and conſent: ven ſo it falls out in our conceptions of the goſ-el, the ſtraitneſs and narrowneſs of our ſpirits kes in truth by parcels, disjointed from the hole, looks upon one ſide of it, and ſees not the ther. As for example, ſometimes there appears nto us our duty and ſtrait obligation to holy walk-g, and this being ſeen and conſidered alone, or-inarily fills the ſoul with ſome fears, jealouſies, nd confuſions. Another time there riſes out from nder the cloud, the mercy and peace of Chriſt in viting, accepting, and pardoning ſinners by his lood, *that cleanſes from all ſin*; and in that view, uch is our weakneſs and ſhortneſs of ſight) there nothing elſe preſented but pardoning grace; and ence there is occaſion given to the corruption of ur hearts, to inſinuate ſecretly and ſubtilly unto us me inclinations to more liberty, and indulgence the fleſh. Thus you ſee what ſtumbling in prac-ice, and diſorder in walking, this partial way of re-eiving the truth occaſioneth. But it hath no leſs in-uence upon the many controverſies and differences doctrine and opinion about grace and works: for rom whence ariſes theſe miſtakes on both hands, ut from the ſtraitneſs of our apprehenſions, that we o not take the truth of God in its full latitude, but eing eager upon one part and zealous of it, we al-moſt loſe the remembrance, and ſometimes falls wrangling with the other. Many that proclaim he free grace of the goſpel, their fault is not that hey make it freer than it is; for truly it is as free s any *Antinomian* can apprehend it; but rather be-auſe they take it not in its intire and full com-plexion, which beſt declares the freedom of it, as omprehending both the pardon of ſin, and purity

from

from sin, grace towards us, and grace within
and so while they only plead for the one, they se
at least to oppugn the other. And in like mann
others apprehending the necessity, beauty, a
comelineſs of holineſs, and new obedience, a
much in preſſing and declaring this in oppoſit
to the other way, in which there may be ſome m
ſtake, not in making it more meritorious than it
but at leaſtwiſe in ſuch a manner it may be hold
out, as may ſomewhat obſcure the freedom
God's grace. The occaſion of both theſe miſapp
henſions, may be from the ſcattering of theſe
verſe parcels of truth, as ſo many pearls in the fie
of the ſcripture, one is found here, and one tak
it up, as if there were no more; here is repentanc
and away he goes with that, without conjoinin
theſe ſcattered pieces into one body. But yet ou
Saviour ſometimes gives us compleat ſums an
models of the goſpel, in which he preſents all
one view at once, and eſpecially in theſe word
now read. The ſum of all the goſpel is containe
in two words, *Come unto me, and take my yoke upo
you:* all the duty of a Chriſtian, and all his encou
ragement is here. His duty is to believe in Chriſt
and to give himſelf up to his obedience, and becom
his diſciple, and to follow his example; and hi
encouragement is the reſt promiſed, reſt to hi
ſoul, which is the only proper ſeat of reſt or di
quiet; it is moſt capable and ſenſible of both, an
this reſt includes in its boſom, not only peace an
tranquillity of mind here, which all the creature
combined cannot give, but all felicity beſides
that eternal reſt from all the labours of this li
and complacency in the fruition of God for ever
You ſee then what is the full invitation of the go
pel, it is nothing elſe but come, and have reſt
take on an eaſy yoke, and ye ſhall find reſt, com
and

d be happy, come and receive life, that which
seek elſewhere both ignorantly and vainly,
e it is only to be found. Come (ſays Chriſt) and
romiſe to give it unto you; wait upon me by
dience, and you ſhall at length find by experi-
e, that reſt which I am willing to give you.

I deſire you may conſider both the order, and
connexion of theſe integral parts of the goſpel.
e order of the goſpel is a great part of the goſ-
; in ſome things method is arbitrary, and it
tters not which go before, or which follow after,
here they become eſſential, and ſo a great part
the matter itſelf. There muſt be firſt coming to
riſt, and then taking on his yoke; firſt believ-
, then obeying his commandments: this is as
ential an order, as is between the fruit and the
ot, the ſtream and the fountain, the ſun-beam
d the ſun. Will any man expect fruit till he
nt? There muſt then firſt be the implanting of
ſoul into Chriſt by faith, and then in due ſeaſon
lows the fruits of obedience by abiding in him.
e perverting of this order makes much diſorder
the ſpirits and lives of Chriſtians. But how can
chooſe but all muſt wither and decay, if the ſoul
not planted by this river, *whoſe ſtreams gladden*
city of our God; if the roots of it be not wa-
ed with the frequent apprehenſion and conſide-
ion of the grace of Chriſt, or the riches of God's
rcy. The way and method of many Chriſtians
juſt oppoſite to this, for you labour and weary
urſelves, how to attain ſome meaſure and ſatiſ-
ction in the latter, before you adventure the firſt;
have the heart humbled by godly ſorrow, and
ſoul inflamed by love to God, and the yoke of
obedience ſubmitted unto; while in the mean
ne you deliberately ſuſpend the exerciſe of faith,
d apprehenſion of the pardoning grace of Chriſt.

Now

Now how this can consist either with sound reason or religion I do not see; for were it not a point of madness to seek fruits from a tree that is lying above ground, and to refuse to plant it till it give some experience of its fruitfulness in the air? And what can be more absurd, than to imagine to have the Spirit of Christ working in the heart godly sorrow, or christian love; and so renewing it again to his image, and yet withal Christ not received into the heart by faith. Do you not know that this is his first entrance into the soul? He enters there by the door of faith, and a soul enters into him at the door of the promise by faith. How then do ye imagine he shall work in you, before you will admit him to come in to you? Besides, either you apprehend that you may attain to such gracious qualifications by your own industry without Christ, which is blasphemous to his name and office; for if you may, what need have you of him? Or if you believe that he is the only treasure of all grace and wisdom, and that all things are delivered to him of the Father; then how do you seek these things without him? It must be wretched folly to seek them elsewhere, and not come to him. And indeed it is observable, that this exhortation to come unto Christ is subjoined unto ver. 27. *All things are delivered unto me by the Father;* And therefore seeing all grace, and life, and happiness is inclosed in me; seeing without me there is nothing but a barren wilderness, in which you may toil and labour, and weary yourselves in fruitless pursuits; come hither where it is originally and plentifully seated, and you cannot miss your end nor lose your labour. And for the further illustration of this subject, I shall only add that,

Secondly, There is another woful mistake possesses your minds who take up this way; for certain

nly you muſt think that there is ſome worth or gnity in it, whereby you intend to recommend urſelves unto Chriſt: for to what purpoſe is that xious and ſcrupulous exaction of ſuch previous alifications? If it be not to give ſome more bold- ſs and confidence to thy mind, to adventure to ieve the promiſes, and come to Chriſt, becauſe u thinkeſt thou canſt not come, when thou art unclean and ſo unworthy; and therefore thou prehends that thou can ſo purge thyſelf from ſin, d adorn thyſelf with graces, as may procure me liking, and procure ſome favour at Chriſt's nd, whſch is indeed very oppoſite to the tenor the propoſal of free grace in the goſpel, in which ere is nothing upon the creature's part required a condition, or quallification to make them the ore welcome in coming unto Chriſt,

Let this word then abide with you, *Come unto , and take my yoke upon you, and learn of me*; hich in ſubſtance is this, Come and caſt your rdens on me firſt, and then take my burden up- you. O it is a bleſſed exchange! caſt your heavy rden upon my back, and take my light burden yours. For what is it to invite them that labour d are ladened to come, but to come, and repoſe emſelves for reſt upon him? and that is directly lay over that which burdens and ladeneth them on him. There is an unſupportable burden of , the guilt of ſin, and there is an intolerable eight of wrath; *mine iniquities are gone over ine head*, Pſal. xxxviii. 4. *and as an heavy bur- n they are too heavy for me*; and when the wrath God is joined to this burden, the name of the ord burning with anger, how may you conceive ſoul will be preſſed under that burden, which is heavy, that it will preſs the mountains into val- , make the ſea flee out of its place, and the

earth tremble. Now here is the invitation, Is th
any penitent ſoul that feels the burden of
weight of ſin, and wrath, let them come and
burden their ſouls of care, fear, and anxiety in t
bleſſed port of reſt, and refuge for poor ſinners.
there a yoke of tranſgreſſions wreathed about
neck, and bound by the hand of God? Lam. i.
a yoke that neither men or angels are able to be
then I beſeech you come hither, and put over yo
yoke upon Jeſus Chriſt; tie it about him, for G
hath laid upon him *the iniquities of us all, and*
bore our ſins. He did bear the yoke of divine
pleaſure, and it was bound about his neck w
God's own hand, with his own conſent. N
here is the actual liberty and the releaſement o
ſoul from under the yoke; here is its actual re
and quiet from under the pain of this burd
when a ſoul is made to conſent unto, and willing
to put over that burden upon Chriſt. And t
freedom and vacancy from the unſupportable yo
of guilt, will certainly diſpoſe the ſoul, and ma
it more capable of receiving the eaſy and porta
yoke of his commandments: for you may ea
perceive how eaſy love maketh all things, e
difficulties themſelves; let once a ſoul be enga
that way to Chriſt, (and there is no poſſibility
engaging it in affection without ſome taſte a
feeling, or believing apprehenſion of his love a
ſufficiency for us) and you will ſee that the ro
way will be made plain, and the crooked
ſtraight; heavy things light, and hard things e
For what command can be grievous to that ſ
who apprehends that Chriſt hath taken the g
weight of wrath off it, and carried away the in
lerable pain of its guiltineſs, which would h
preſſed and depreſſed it eternally, without any h
of relaxation or eaſe? Hath he born a yoke bo

by the majesty of God, and fastened with the
ds of his displeasure? And can it be so heavy to
elieving soul to take up that obedience which is
ened with the cords of love? And besides, how
ch will faith facilitate this, and will make this
e to be chearfully and willingly submitted to?
ause it delivers the soul from these unsufferable
es and fears, which did quite enervate its strength,
take away its courage? For I pray you, what
here in a soul under the fear of wrath, that is
totally disabled by that heavy pressure, to any
ling or chearful obedience? The mystery of the
it is spent that way, the courage of the soul is
eated, the heart is weakened, and nothing is
able to the yoke of Christian love and obedi-
e: but when once a soul apprehends Christ,
is a reposition of all his cares and burdens, and
nes to exoner his soul in him, and cast his bur-
n upon him; then the soul is lightened as it
re for this journey, then he may walk in the
ys of obedience, without the pressing fear, and
hing anguish of the dread of condemnation of
law. To conclude this head, nothing will make
take up this yoke willingly, or bear it con-
ntly, except you be delivered from the other
e, that was so heavy even to Christ; and that
de him cry, *My soul is exceeding heavy and trou-
, and what shall I say? Father, save me from
hour,*

Now these who are here in the text invited to
e unto Christ, you see them described to be
ouring and heavy laden persons. *Come unto me
ye that labour*, &c. at least it seems to hold forth
revious qualification, and condition of believ-
, without which we may not venture to come
o Christ. Indeed it is commonly so taken, and
taken; many conceive that the clause is re-

ſtrictive and excluſive; that is to ſay, that this de
ſcription of burdened and wearied ſinners, is a l
mitation of the command of believing, and that
circumſcribes the warrant of coming to Chriſt,
if none might lawfully come unto him, but the
that are thus burdened: and thus it is ſuppoſed
be a bar ſet upon the door of believing, at whic
ſinners muſt enter in to Chriſt; to hold out, an
ſhut out all thoſe who are not thus qualified fo
acceſs: which I truly conceive is contrary to th
whole ſtrain and current of the diſpenſation of t
goſpel. Therefore I take it to be rather declarativ
or ampliative, or both. I ſay, it is partly for de
claration not of the warrant to come, but of th
perſons who ordinarily do come to Chriſt: It d
clares not ſimply and univerſally who ſhould come
but theſe who actually do come unto Chriſt. Tak
it thus then, all perſons who hear the goſpel, a
invited to come unto our Saviour without excep
tion; the blind, the lame, theſe on the high way
not only the thirſty and the hungry, Iſa. lv. 1. bu
theſe who have no thirſt, or hunger for righteou
neſs, but only for things that do not profit, ver. 2
Not only the broken-hearted, that deſire to com
near to righteouſneſs; but even the ſtout-hearte
that are far from righteouſneſs, ſuch are command
ed to hearken, and incline their ear, Iſa. xlvi. 1
Chap lv. 2, 3. Now this command that reache
all, gives an immediate actual warrant and right
all to come, if they will; for what is required pr
vious to give warrant to obedience, but the com
mand of obedience? And therefore the Jews we
challenged becauſe they would not come to Chri
that they might have life. Now then there is n
bar of ſecluſion ſet upon the door of the goſpel,
keep out any ſoul from entering in; there is n
qualification or condition preſcribed by the goſpe
an

thout which if he come, he is actually welcomed
d received by Christ, whatsoever you suppose he
nts. It is true, mens own security and unbelief
ll exclude them from Christ, but that is no re-
ction on the gospel's part; it is a bar set on a
n's own heart, that shuts him up from coming
the patent entry of the gospel.

Therefore I take it thus, that though all ought
come to Christ, and none that are indeed wil-
g are debarred for the want of any supposed
ndition; yet none will actually and really come,
they be in some measure sensible of the weight
their sins, and the wrath of God; till they are la-
uring under the feeling of their own misery and
sperate condition: and whatsoever be the mea-
e of this, if it give so much uneasiness to a man
t he can be content of rest and ease in Christ,
may and certainly ought to come unto Jesus,
d cast all his burdens upon him. I think then,
t way that is in so frequent use among Christi-
s, to sit down, and essay to bring our hearts to
me deep humiliation, and so to prescribe and or-
r it, as we will deliberately delay, and suspend
e thoughts of believing, till we have attained
mething of this: I say this way crosses the very
ention of Christ in uttering these words, and such
e. For certainly he meant to take away impedi-
nts, and not to cast delays in our way; and
erefore I said the word was rather for ampliation,
t is, rather to encourage these who accounted
mselves excluded, than to exclude any who de-
e to come: Come unto me, every one, but espe-
lly you that labour, ye should make the greatest
te. Come unto me even though ye apprehend
e wrath of God to be intolerable, and have fool-
y wearied yourselves in seeking rest by other
ys. Ye that are most apprehensive of your sins,

and so are apt to doubt of any acceptation; y
that think yourselves worse than any, and so
have least warrant to come to me; yet come, a
I will by no means cast you out, but give rest
your souls. So that it is not intended to exclu
those who are most ready to think themselves e
cluded, because they see so much sin in themselv

Therefore, my beloved, without further disp
ing about it, let me exhort you in the name
Jesus Christ, who here invites and commands yo
that you would at once put a period to this, a
bring it to some conclusion; since you are disea
and disquieted in yourselves, and cannot find r
in your own bosoms, I beseech you come he
where it is most likely to be found, and it is mo
certain, if you come you shall find it. Don't co
tinue wrangling and contesting about the matte
for what is that but to encrease your labour, a
vexation, and add to your heavy burden? It w
be so far from giving you any ease in the result
it, that it will rather make your wounds more i
curable, and your burdens more intolerable
which is both opposite to the intention of the g
pel, and the nature of believing. Here then is yo
rest, here is your refreshing rest; here it is in qu
yielding to his gracious offers, and silent subm
ting to the gospel, not in bauling or contendi
with it, which is truly a contending against ourselv
Isa. xxviii. 12. *This is the rest, wherewith you m
cause the weary to rest*, it is nowhere else; not
heaven or earth: for there is no back that will t
on this burden or can carry it away from us. There
no disburdening of a sinner of guilt and wrath,
any other port or haven, but in Christ, who is t
city of refuge; whereso'ever you think to exo
yourselves besides this, you will find no refreshin
but a multiplication of burdens and cares; yo
burd

ürden ſhall be rolled over upon you again with ouble weight. Therefore my beloved, if you will ot hear th s, conſider what follows, *viz.* you hall refuſe this reſt and refreſhing, and reſtleſsly eek another reſt: you may go and be doing, but *ou ſhall fall backward, and be broken, and ſnared.* our burden ſhall fall back upon you, and you hall fall and be broken under it. That which the ord ſaid to *Iſrael* when they would flee to *Egypt*, moſt true in this caſe, *In returning, and in reſt e ſhall be ſaved, in quietneſs and confidence ſhall be our ſtrength; but alas! they would not*, that is a ad cloſe.

SERMON VII.

Matth. xi. 29. *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, &c.*

SElf-love is generally eſteemed infamous and contemptible among men, it is of a bad report every where; and indeed as it is taken commonly there is good reaſon for it, that it ſhould be hiſſed out of all ſocieties, if reproaching and ſpeaking evil of it would do it. But to ſpeak the truth, the name is not ſo fit to expreſs the thing; for that which men call ſelf love, may rather be called ſelf-hatred: nothing is more pernicious to a man's ſelf, or peſtilent to the ſocieties of men than this; for if it may be called love, certainly it is not ſelf-love, but the love of ſome baſer and lower thing than ſelf to our eternal prejudice; for what is our ſelves, but our ſouls? Matth. xvi. 26. Luke ix. 25. For our Lord there ſhews that to loſe our ſouls, and to loſe ourſelves is one and the ſame thing. But what is it to love our ſouls, certainly

'tis not to be enamoured with their deformed shap
as if it were perfect beauty? Neither can it be i
terpreted any true love to our souls, to seek sati
faction and rest unto them, where it is not at
to be found; for this is to put them in perpetu
pain and disquiet. But here it is that true self-lov
and soul-love centereth, in that which our Savio
propounds, namely, *to desire and seek the everla*
ing welfare of our souls, and that perpetual rest u
to them, after which there is no labour, nor moti
any more. Therefore to draw unto himself the sou
of men the more sweetly, and the more strong
too, he fasteneth about them a cord of their ow
interest, and that the greatest, real rest; and b
this he is likely to prevail with men in a way suit
to their reasonable natures. *Come unto me all y*
that labour and are wearied, and I will give y
rest. Self-interest is ordinarily exploded, at le
disowned and disclaimed in mens discourses, as
base, wretched, sordid thing; which tho' all me
act by it, yet they are all ashamed to profess i
But yet if the interest be so high as indeed to co
cern self, and that which is truly our self; the
both nations and persons count it the most justifi
able ground of many of their actions, self-preserv
tion: but yet there is a higher interest than tha
that relates to the eternal interest of our souls; an
truly to own and profess, and prosecute that in
terest of soul-preservation, of eternal rest to ou
souls, is neither ignoble, or unbeseeming a Chri
stian; neither is it any way inconsistent with th
pursuance of that more publick and catholick in
terest of God's glory; in respect of which all int
rests, even the most general and publick, are pa
ticular and private. For this is the goodness of o
God, that he hath bound up his own honour, an
our happiness in one bundle together; that he ha
kn

eit the reſt of our precious ſouls, and the glory of his wn name inſeparably together: not only to conde- cend to our weakneſs, but to deal with us ſuitably our natures. He propoſes our own intereſt chiefly, draw us to himſelf, and allows this happy ſelf- eking in which a man loſes himſelf, that he may e found again in Chriſt. Seeing then it is thus, hat elſewhere, whereſoever you turn yourſelves, ithin or without, there is no reſt, but endleſs la- our, and fruitleſs toil, you find this already by xperience; you who apprehend the weight of your ins, and the greatneſs of divine wrath, that there an intolerable preſſure upon your ſouls already, nd that this is nothing diminiſhed, but rather aug- ented by your vain labours, and inquiries, after ome eaſe and peace, your endeavours to ſatisfy your own conſciences, and pacify God's wrath ome other way, have filled you with more reſtleſs nxiety: and ſeeing there is a certain aſſurance of rue reſt and tranquillity here, upon the eaſieſt terms imaginable, that is, come to Jeſus Chriſt, all ye who are diſquieted and reſtleſs, and he will give you reſt. O ſhould not this be an invincible and irre- iſtible attractive to your hearts, to draw them to our Redeemer over all impediments? the reſt is perfect happineſs; and yet the terms are eaſy, only come and embrace it, and ſeek it no where elſe: there is a kind of quietneſs and tranquillity in the ſeeking and attaining this reſt: all other reſts are come to by much labour and buſineſs. Here Chriſt would have you who have laboured in vain for reſt, and loſt your toil and your pains to come at it, by ceaſ- ing from labour, as it were, which you could not attain by labour, to come by it. *Cunctando* (by keep- ing) which you could not gain *pugnando* (by fight- ing.) There is a quiet and ſilent way of believing promiſes, and rolling yourſelves upon Chriſt offer-

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ed in them; which is the neareſt and moſt co
pendious way to this bleſſed reſt and quietne
which if you think to attain by much clamour a
contention of debate, or diſpute, or by the pain
labour and vexation of your ſpirits, which you c
exerciſe of mind; you take the way about, and p
yourſelves further off from it. Faith has a kind
preſent vacancy and quietneſs in it, in the ve
acting of it. It is not a tumultuous thing, but co
poſes the ſoul to quietneſs and ſilence, to a ceſſati
from all other things; but the looking upon Chri
holden out in the goſpel, and this in due time w
give greater reſt and tranquillity. Conſider wh
the Lord ſpeaks to the people that would take
journey upon them to *Egypt*, Iſa. xxx. 15. *In r
turning and reſt ſhall ye be ſaved, in quietneſs a
confidence ſhall be your ſtrength.* Their peace w
near hand, but they would travel abroad to ſeek i
and they find trouble; their ſtrength was to
ſtill, and be quiet, and truſt in the Lord: nay, b
they would not ſit ſtill, but flee and wander abro
to their old houſe of bondage; and therefore ſa
the Lord you ſhall flee. Now may not this repr
ſent the folly and madneſs of ſouls that are und
the fear of wrath, and ſenſe of ſin, as it were
type of it? Our reſt is in reſting on a Saviour, ou
peace is in quiet confidence in him; it is not f
off, it is in our mouth: *The word is near* (ſa
Paul) *it is neither in heaven above, nor in the dep
below.* We need not go abroad and ſearch for th
happineſs we want, it is nigh at hand in the go
pel; but while we refuſe this, and give ourſelv
to reſtleſs agitation and perplexity about it, ſom
times we apprehend that we are eaſed in our tr
vels and endeavours; but it ſhall prove to us n
better than *Egypt*, a houſe of bondage: whereſ
ever we ſeek ſhelter out of Chriſt, we will find it
broke

oken reed, that not only will fail under us, but the rent will ſplit our hand, and pierce us thro' ith many ſorrows. To conclude then this head, oming to Chriſt with our burdens is a motion to-ards reſt; for he adds, *I will give you reſt:* but oreover, there is a kind of reſt in this motion; it an eaſier, plainer and pleaſanter motion, than eſe troubled and laborious windings, and wan-erings of our hearts after vanity. He perſuades ou to walk in this path of pleaſantneſs and peace, nd you ſhall find a great reſt at the end of it; *eceiving* (ſays Peter) *the end of your faith, the ternal ſalvation of your ſouls.*

Now the next thing in the text, is having come o Jeſus, and found reſt and happineſs in him, we muſt *take his yoke upon us*; and this is the other ntegral part of the goſpel, of which I deſire you o conſider theſe few particulars, that occur in he words. *The order in which it is to be taken on. The nature of this yoke. And the moſt ready and expeditious way of bearing it.*

The method and order in which Chriſt's yoke is to be taken upon us, *is firſt*, To come unto our Saviour, and give over the yoke of our tranſgreſſions to him, and then to take up the yoke of his commandments from him; to believe in his promiſes, and reſt our ſouls on them; and to take up the yoke of his precepts, and proceed to motion, and walking in that reſt. Now this method hath a double advantage in it, for the real receiving and carrying of Chriſt's yoke; it gives vacancy and room for it, and it gives ſtrength and furniture for it: it expels that which would totally diſable you to bear it, and brings in that comfortable ſupply, which will ſtrengthen and enable you to bear it. Conſider what poſture a ſoul is put into, that lives under the the terror of God, and is filled with the apprehen-

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ſion of the guilt of ſin, and the greatneſs of God's wrath. I ſay, ſuch a ſoul till he have ſome reſt from that grievous labour, is fit for no other more pleaſant labour, until he be ſomething diſburthened of that which is like to preſs him down to hell. He is not very capable of any new burden, until the yoke of his tranſgreſſions that is wreathed about his neck be taken off. Do ye think he can find any vacant room for the yoke of Chriſt's obedience? When a ſoul is under the dominion of fear and terror, under the power of grief and anguiſh, do ye think he is fit for any thing, or can do any thing, but groan in that priſon of darkneſs, under theſe chains? Such a ſoul is in bondage, under ſervitude, and can neither take up this yoke of liberty, nor walk in it. The ſtrength and moiſture of the ſpirit is drunk up by the poiſon of theſe arrows; and there remains neither attention, affection, nor ſpirit for any thing elſe. Therefore here is the incomparable advantage that redounds from this way of coming firſt to Chriſt, and exonering our cares and fears in his boſom; and in diſburthening our ſins upon him, who hath taken them on, and carried them away, as that ſcape-goat ſent unto the wilderneſs on which they laid the ſins of the people: by this means, I ſay, you ſhall have a vacancy for the yoke of Chriſt, and liberty to all your faculties, your underſtanding, will and affections, (which are no better than ſlaves and captives *non ſui juris*, while they are under theſe tyrannous paſſions of fear and horror) to attend the obedience of Chriſt, and the drawing of his yoke: this will relieve your ſouls out of priſon, and then you will be fit for employment. Beſides this, there is furniture and help brought into the ſoul, which enables it to this; and without which, though it were not preſſed under a burden of ſin and wrath, yet it would neither be able nor willing.

lling. There is that ſupply and ſtrength that
h brings from Chriſt, which ariſes from our
ſtical implantation in him; from hence flows
t communication of his grace to a believer, *The*
w came by Moſes, but grace and truth by Jeſus
riſt, John i. 10, 17. Now this efficacy and ver-
e that is in Chriſt the head, is tranſmitted unto
e members of his body by believing in him. In-
ed the very apprehenſion of ſuch a Saviour may
ve ſome quickning vertue in it, but certainly the
eat influence of life is annexed to it by his gracious
omiſe; *becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo*, John
v. 19. *As the living Father who ſent me, lives in*
mſelf, and I have life by the Father; *ſo he that*
lieves on me, ſhall live by me, John vi. 57. *A-*
de in me, and I in you, and ye ſhall bring forth
uch fruit. He hath graciouſly appointed the de-
vation of that life to us, to be conjoined with our
ght apprehenſions, and believing meditations of
m; making, as it were, faith the opening of his
ouſe, to let in his fulneſs to us. Now beſides this
ore myſterious and ſupernatural furniture and
pply, there is even ſomething that is naturally
onſequent to it; ſome enabling of the ſoul for
oly obedience, flows naturally from the love of
hriſt: and whenever a believer apprehends what
e has done for him, finds ſome reſt and relaxation
n him, it cannot but beget ſome inward warmth
f love to him, who ſo loved us. *Faith worketh*
y love, ſays Paul: the way it goes to action is by
ffection, it once inflames that, and then there is
othing more active and irreſiſtible. It hath a kind
f indefatigable firmneſs in it; it hath an unweari-
d ſtrength to move in the yoke all the day long.
n a word, nothing is almoſt impoſſible, or too
ard for it; for it is of the nature of fire to break
hrough all, and over all impediments; nothing is

ſo

ſo eaſy but it becomes uneaſy to a ſoul under fear and nothing ſo difficult but it becomes eaſy to a ſo wherein perfect love has caſt out fear: for lo makes a ſoul to move ſupernaturally in divi things, as a natural or co-natural agent, free willingly, and conſtantly. If they be not ſuitab to our natures as corrupted, and ſo grievous to lo then as much as it poſſeſſes the heart, it makes t heart co-natural to them; and ſupplies the place that natural inſtinct that carries other creatures their own works and ends, ſtrongly and ſweetl 1 John v. 3. Pſal. cxix. 165. Neh. viii. 10. C iii. 15. Now you may judge whether or not yo can poſſibly expect ſo much advantage in any othe method or way you take. This I leave to your ow conſideration and experience.

And ſo I come to the next thing propoſed, To conſider what this yoke is, and what is the n ture of it. And may I not upon this head juſtl enough diſtinguiſh a twofold yoke of doctrine an diſcipline, that is the yoke of Chriſt's command ments and laws, which both in his love and wi dom he hath impoſed upon us for the regulation o our lives; and this we are to take on, by an obedi ence chearful, willing, and conſtant. But there another yoke mentioned in ſcripture, namely, th yoke of his chaſtiſements and correcting; ſuch one, as *Ephraim* Jer. xxxi. 18. was tried with and was long or he could learn to bear it: *It i good for a man to bear this yoke in his youth*, Lam iii. 27. now whether or not this be meaned here I do not contend. The firſt is the chief intent, and it is not needful to exclude this altogether, ſince it is not the ſmalleſt point of Chriſtianity to take up the one yoke by ſubmiſſion, as well as to take up the other by obedience: however it be, obedience muſt be taken ſo largely, as it cannot but compre-

hend

d the ſweet compliance, and ſubmiſſion of the to God's will in all croſs diſpenſations, which little probation of the loyal and obedient tem- of the heart. Both yokes muſt be taken up, for Chriſt ſpeaks of his croſs, *If any man will be my iple, he muſt take up his croſs and follow me*, Mat. 24, 25. It muſt be lifted up upon our ſhoulders t were, willingly, and chearfully, we actually ncurring as it were to the bearing of it, and the eiving it; but there is this difference between one yoke, and the other; the one cannot be poſed upon us, neither can we bear it, except actively and with our own conſent, and delight, e it up. Though God may impoſe laws upon and give us righteous and faithful command- nts, which indeed lay a ſtrait obligation and tye on us, under pain of diſloyalty, and rebellion to lk in them; yet it never becomes our yoke, and never carried by us, until there be a ſubſequent nſent of the ſoul, and a full condeſcenſion of the art, to embrace that yoke with delight: till we ke ourſelves unto this commandment, by loving d willing obedience, we have not his yoke upon *Thy people ſhall be made willing in the day of y power*. It is not terrors and conſtraints, but the nds of love will bind us to this yoke: it muſt be ound upon us by the cords of love, not of fear. e is a true king not a tyrant, he loves *imperare olentibus*, to rule every man with his own con- nt; but a tyrant rules every man againſt his will, *olentibus imperat*. But the other yoke of his diſ- ipline, his croſs, whether it be for his ſake, or hether it be the general croſs of our pilgrimage ere, and the viciſſitudes and changes of this life: is not in our arbitrement to bear a croſs, or have croſs or not; have it we muſt, bear it we muſt, hether we chooſe or refuſe it. There is no man

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can be exempted from some yoke of this kind; n
man can promise himself immunity from som
cross or other: if not in poverty, yet in abundance
if not in contempt and reproach, yet in honou
and greatness. There is nothing of that kind th
will not become weighty with itself alone, tho' no
thing be superadded to it; so then since every m
must have a yoke, he hath only the advantage wh
takes it up, and bears it patiently: for if he thus swee
ly comply and yield to God's will, he will not
much bear his cross, as his cross will bear him.
thou take it up, it will take thee up, and carry the
if thou submit and stoop willingly to God's goo
pleasure, thou wilt make it a more easy yoke, an
light burden, *ducant volentem fata nolentem tr*
hunt. If thou be patient his dispensation will gentl
and sweetly lead thee to rest; but an impatien
soul is dragged and drawn after it against he hair
and yet he must follow it. There is this mighty
disadvantage in our impatient unsubjection t
God's will, that it makes that a yoke, wh ch is n
yoke; no cross, a cross, an easy yoke, hard, an
a light burden heavy, and yet notwithstanding w
must bear it. A yoke, a cross, we cannot escape
whithersoever we go, whithersoever we turn our
selves, because we carry ourselves about with us
and our own crooked perverse apprehensions o
things, which trouble us more than the things
themselves. Now consider the reasonableness o
taking on the yoke of Christ's obedience: shoul
we not with *David*, *offer ourselves willingly*, an
present ourselves even before we are called: *Lo,*
come, to do thy will, O God; I delight in thy law,
is in my inward part, Psal. xl. 8. There is no yok
so reasonable, if you consider it as imposed b
Christ our King and Law-giver; hath he not re
deemed us from the house of bondage, from th
vile

and baſeſt ſlavery, under the moſt cruel ty-
, Satan, and death, and hell? Heb. ii. 15.
he not aſſerted and reſtored us into the true
y of men, and of the ſons of God? *The Son*
made us free, John viii. 32. When we were
r the moſt grievous yoke of ſin, and wrath,
the eternal curſe of God. He hath put his own
under it, and become a curſe for us, that he
t redeem us from the curſe of the law; and
hath carried away theſe iron-chariots, theſe
s of braſs and iron, whereby Satan kept us in
ction; and now being eſtabliſhed, our careful
, not only by the title of the juſteſt and moſt
ficial conqueſt that ever was made, but by
's ſolemn appointment upon the hill of *Zion*,
. ii 6. And being exalted a Prince to give us
ation, were it not moſt ſtrange, if his kingdom
ld want laws, which are the life and ſoul of
blicks and monarchies? Ought not we to ſub-
to them gladly, and obey them chearfully?
uld not we abſolutely reſign ourſelves to his
, and eſteem his commandments concerning all
gs to be right? What command ſhould be
vous to that ſoul, who is delivered from the
e of all the commandments, and is aſſured never
ter into condemnation? If there were no more
ay, were it not monſtrous ingratitude to with-
w ourſelves from ſubjection to him, or yield
dience to any other ſtrange lords, as our luſts
would it not be an unexemplified unthank-
eſs to requite rebellion to him, for ſo much
aralleled affection? *Since we are not our own,*
bought with a price; we are not *ſui juris*, to
oſe of ourſelves; all reaſon ſhould ſay, that he
payed ſo dear for us, ſhould have the uſe of
and that is nothing but glory he ſeeks from us,
we offer and conſecrate ſoul and body to him,

to come under his yoke: as for the gain, it dounds all to ourſelves, and that as the gr gain too.

Now a word to the laſt thing propoſed, for I only hint at it, the moſt excellent and ready of bearing this yoke, is to learn of him, to pr him as our pattern, and to yield ourſelves to as his diſciples and ſcholars; not only to l doctrine, but to imitate his example and prac *to walk even as he walked*: and herein is great ment of perſuaſion, Chriſt puts nothing upon y but what he did take upon himſelf. There i much more reaſon for you to take it up, that his own perſonal yoke, which he himſelf carri *for he delighted to do the Father's will, it was meat and drink* to work in that yoke. Now t are two things eſpecially wherein he propones h ſelf the exemplar or pattern of our imitation, his humility and meekneſs of ſpirit: *He was and lowly in heart*. And theſe graces have greateſt ſuitableneſs to capacitate and diſpoſe ev man for taking, and keeping the yoke of Chr Humility and lowlineſs bows his back to take the leaſt of his commands; this makes him ſt low, and makes his ſhoulders fit for it: and t meekneſs arms him againſt all difficulties and pediments that may occur in it.

SERMON VIII.

Matth. xi. 29. *Take my yoke upon you*, &c.

CHriſtianity conſiſts in a bleſſed exchange yokes between Chriſt and a pious ſoul; takes our uneaſy yoke, and gives his eaſy yo the ſoul puts upon him that unſupportable yok tranſgreſſions, and takes from him the portable y

is commandments. Our burden was heavy, too
vy for angels, and much more for men; it would
ſh under it all the ſtrength of the creatures;
who could endure the wrath of the Almighty?
what could a man give in exchange for his ſoul?
y, that debt would drown the whole creation, if
y were ſurety for it; notwithſtanding Chriſt hath
en that burden upon him, being able to bear it,
ing Almighty ſhoulders, and everlaſting arms
it: and yet you find how heavy it was for him,
en it preſſed out that groan from him, *Now is*
ſoul ſore amazed, very heavy, and exceeding
rowful even unto death, and what ſhall I ſay?
at which carried it away from us, hath buried
in his grave, whither it preſſed him down, it
s him very low under it, but he hath got above
and is riſen again; and whereas in vain there
s a ſtone put above him, and ſealed, he hath
led a ſtone above that yoke and burden, that it
not be able to weigh down any believing ſoul
hell: for that weight which depreſſed his ſpotleſs
l, would have depreſſed the ſons of men to eter-
l darkneſs. Now for his burden, we obſerve that
is of another nature, to ſpeak properly, than o-
r burdens. It is not a heavy yoke or burden;
t a ſtate of liberty, an ornament, a privilege;
is a chain of gold about a ſaint's neck, to bind
riſt's laws about them; every link of that chain
more precious than rubies or diamonds. If there
any burden in it, it is the burden of honour, the
rden of privilege, and incomparable dignity;
nos, not *onus*, or *onus honoris*. This is that which
puts upon us, or rather that which a believer
ceives from him. Now I will not have you ſo to
ke it, as if Chriſt did not propoſe the terms thus,
If you will be willing to take on the yoke of my
ws, I will take on the yoke of your ſins and cur-

ses." Nay, it is not such an exchange as is
mutually dependent; for it hath pleased the Fa
without consulting us, and the Son without
knowledge or consent, to conclude what to do w
the heavy and unsupportable burden of sinn
The Father laid upon him the iniquities of us
and he of his own accord *hath born our griefs,*
carried our sorrows, Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6. and that b
den did bruise him; yea, *it pleased the Lord*
bruise him, and it pleased himself to be bruis
O strange and unparalleled love, that could dig
so hard things, and make so grievous things pl
sant! Now I say, he having thus taken on
burden already, calls upon us afterward, and se
forth proclamations, and affectionate invitatio
"Come unto me all ye poor sinners, that are b
dened with sin, and wearied with that burde
you who have tired yourselves in these by-wa
and laboured elsewhere in vain, to seek rest a
peace: *you have toiled all night and caught noth*
come hither, cast your net upon this side of t
ship, and you shall find what you seek. I have u
dertaken your yoke and burden, why then do
laden yourselves any more with the apprehensi
of it? The real and true burden of wrath I ha
already carried away, why then do ye weary you
selves with the imagination of it? Only come
me, and see what I have done, and you shall fin
rest and peace."

Now this being proponed absolutely unto si
ners, and they being invited to consent to th
which Christ hath done in their name; in the ne
place he comes to impose his easy yoke upon t
not at all for any recompence of what he hath don
but rather for some testimony of gratitude an
thankfulness on our part, and for the manifestati
of grace and love on his part. I do indeed co
cer

e, that the impoſition of the yoke of Chriſt's
s upon believers, is as much for the declaration
his own love and goodneſs, as the teſtification
our thankfulneſs. If you conſider the liberty,
beauty, and the equity of this yoke, it will ra-
r be conſtrued to proceed from the greateſt love
favour, than to tend any way to recompence
love. Herein is perfect liberty, Pſal. cxix. 32,45.
s an enlargement of heart, from the baſe reſtraint
abominable ſervitude of the vileſt luſts, that
annize over us, and keep our affections in bon-
e. O how narrow bounds is the liberty of the
its of men confined unto, that they ſerve their
luſts! ſin itſelf and the luſts of the fleſh, are
ievous yoke; which the putting on of this yoke
ſes thee from: and when the heart is thus en-
ged with love and delight in Chriſt, then the
unfettered, may walk at liberty, *and run in*
way of God's commandments. I will walk at
rty, when I have a reſpect to thy ways, Pſal.
x. 45. O how ſpacious and broad is that way
reality, which to our firſt apprehenſion and the
mmon conſtruction is ſtrait and narrow. The
th is, there is no ſtraitneſs, no bondage, no
atineſs, but in ſin; that is the moſt abominable
ſlage. and the greateſt thraldom of the immor-
ſpirit; to be ſo baſely dragged by the fleſh
wnward, to the vileſt drudgery, and to be ſo
ched and hampered within the narrowneſs of
ated and periſhing things. To ſpeak properly,
re is no ſlavery but this of the ſpirit; for it is
ſo contrary to the nature and ſtate of the body,
hich by its firſt inſtitution was made a ſervant,
be under the dominion of men, and further we
not reach: yea, it is poſſible for a man while
body is impriſoned, to be yet at greater freedom,
n theſe who impriſon him, as his mind is, ſo he

is. But to be a ſervant of ſin and unrighteouſne
muſt totally degrade the ſoul of man ; it quite d
faces that primitive glory, and deſtroys that nat
liberty, in which he was created. Therefore to ha
this ſin taken off us, and the yoke of Chriſt's ob
dience put on us, *to be made free from ſin, and*
come the ſervants of righteouſneſs, that is the ſo
true liberty; which ſets it forth at large to exp
tiate in the exceeding broad commandments, a
in the infinite goodneſs of God, where there is i
finite room for the ſoul.

When then I conſider how beautiful this is fo
reaſonable ſpirit, to be under the law of him th
hath made it, and redeemed it; I cannot but thi
that Chriſt doth rather beautify and bleſs, th
burden. The beauty of the world conſiſts in th
ſweet order, and harmonious ſubordination of
things, to that law God hath impoſed upon the
or engraves upon their natures; if we ſhould ſu
poſe but one of the parts of the world to ſwer
from the primitive inſtitution, what a miſerab
diſtraction would enſue? How deformed wou
this beautiful and adorned fabrick become? Ho
much more is it the beauty, grace, and com
lineſs of an intelligent being, to be under the la
of him, that gave him a being, and to have th
written in his heart? To be in a manner tran
formed by the ſhining glory of theſe laws, to be
living law. What is it I pray you, deforms the
fallen angels, and makes them devils? Why d
we paint a good angel in a beautiful and comel
image, and the devils are commonly repreſente
in the moſt horrid, ugly, and monſtrous ſhap
and viſage? Is it not this that makes the differenc
that the one is fallen from a bleſſed ſubordinatio
to the will of God, and the other keeps that ſt
tion

n? But both are equal in nature, and were a- in the beginning.

Add unto this, the equity of Chriſt's yoke; there nothing either ſo reaſonable in itſelf, or yet ſo table to ourſelves; for what is it that he puts on us? Truly no new commandment; it is but old command renewed: it is no new law, tho' hath conquered us, and hath the right of abſo- dominion over us; yet he hath not changed fundamental laws, he changes only the preſent annical yoke of ſin: but he reſtores us as it were, our fundamental liberty we formerly enjoyed, that ſin forced us from, when it conquered us. riſt's yoke is not a new impoſition, it is but the cient yoke, that was bound upon man's nature God the Creator; the Redeemer doth not invent contrive one of his own; he only looſes off the ke of iniquity, and binds on that ſweet yoke of edience and love to God. He publiſhes the ſame ws, many of which are already written in ſome ſcure characters upon our own minds; and he ain writes them down all over in our hearts. here is nothing ſuperadded by Jeſus Chriſt, but chain of love, to bind this yoke about our necks, d a chain of grace and truth to keep his laws; d truly theſe make the yoke eaſy, and take a- ay the nature of a burden from it. O what mighty d ſtrong perſuaſions! O what conſtraining mo- ves of love, and grace doth the goſpel furniſh! d the rareſt cords to bind on Chriſt's yoke upon reaſonable ſoul; cords of the moſt unparalleled ove.

I ſhall only add unto all this, that as herein riſt hath expreſſed or compleats the expreſſion his love upon his part; ſo upon our part it be- omes us to take on his yoke, in teſtimony of our ankfulneſs. We owe our very ſelves unto him,

what can be more ſaid? We owe ourſelves o and again; for we are twice his workmanſhip, f created by him, and then renewed or created a unto good works. *We are bought with a price, ure not our own:* can there be any obligation i gined beyond this? Let us therefore confec ourſelves to his glory; let all who believe the g pel, dedicate themſelves to its obedience; not much for ſalvation to themſelves, as their obli tion to their Saviour. We are not called ſo mu to holineſs and virtue that we may be ſaved, a cauſe we are ſaved, to be blameleſs before God love: O how gracious and honourable a diſpo tion of this kind would be, to ſerve him more of gratitude for what he hath done, than merely f the reward that he will give.

SERMON IX.

Rom. xv. 13. *Now the God of hope fill you wit all joy and peace in believing*, &c.

IT is uſual for the Lord in his word, to tur his precepts unto promiſes; which ſhews u that the commandments of God do not ſo muc import an ability in us, or ſuppoſe ſtrength to fu fill them; as declare that obligation which lies up on us, and his purpoſe and intention to accompli in ſome, what he requires of all: and therefore w ſhould accordingly convert all his precepts unt prayers, ſeeing he hath made them promiſes. Thi gives us ground as it were to retort his command by way of requeſts, and ſupplications. The ſcrip ture here gives us a precedent, and often elſewher hath made his command a promiſe, it is then i the next diſpoſition, and neareſt capacity to be

turned

urned into the form of a ſupplication; the joy romiſed in the preceeding verſe is elſewhere com-anded: and this immediately diſpoſes the ſinner o receive a new form of prayer, from a believing eart, and that not only for himſelf, but for others. ou ſee how frequently ſuch holy and hearty wiſhes re interjected in his writings, and indeed ſuch jaculations of the ſoul's deſires, whether kept with-n, or vented, will often interrupt the thoughts and iſcourſes of believers; but yet they break no ſen-ence, they marr no ſenſe, no more than the inter-oſition of a parentheſis. Such deſires will follow y a kind of natural reſultance upon the lively ap-rehenſion of any divine excellent thing, and ſecret omplacency in it; and a ſtirring of the heart to e poſſeſſed with it, will almoſt prevent delibera-ion. Such an attractive power the excellency of ny object hath in the heart, that it draws it and ngages it almoſt before any conſultation be called bout it. Now there is ſomething of this in theſe bjects which we are naturally delighted with; all t leaſt that they want, the apprehenſion ſupplies, nd this draws the heart forcibly after them, as it were, without previous adviſement; yet becauſe f the limitation, emptineſs, and ſcarcity of theſe hings, commonly the deſires of men are contracted uch within themſelves, and run towards a mo-opoly of theſe things. They are ſo poor and nar-ow, that they cannot be enjoyed of moe without iviſion, and the dividing them cannot be without iminution of each man's contentment; and there-ore mens wiſhes ordinarily are ſtinted within their wn ſatisfaction and poſſeſſion, and cannot without ome reſtraint of reaſon extend further to other en. But this is the vaſt difference between ſpiri-ual things and bodily, eternal things and tempo-al, that there is no man poſſeſſed of ſpiritual good,

but

but he deſires a community: it is as natural upon the apprehenſion of them to enlarge the ſoul's wiſhes to other men; becauſe there is ſuch excellency, abundance, and ſolidity diſcovered in them, as that all may be full, and none envy or prejudge another. They are like the light that can communicates itſelf to all, and that without diminution of its ſplendour; all may ſee it without prejudice one to another: they are ſuch an ocean that every one may fill their veſſel, and yet nothing leſs for them that come after. And therefore the ſoul that wiſhes largely for itſelf, will not find that inward diſcontent at the great abundance of another, which is the inſeparable ſhadow of earthly and temporal advantages. It is croſs to mens intereſt that love gain or preferment, or any ſuch thing, that others grow rich, or are advanced high in the world, for it intercepts what they deſire; but it is not at all the intereſt of a godly ſoul, that others be worſe than himſelf; but rather the ſalvation and happineſs of all men, is that intereſt which alone he eſpouſes.

Now for this, my beloved, before we proceed further, you may find how the pulſe of your ſouls beats, and what your temper is, by conſidering what is the ordinary unreſtrained and habitual wiſhes of your hearts. Certainly as men are inclined, ſo they affect, and ſo they deſire; and theſe unpremeditated deſires that are commonly ſtirred up in the hearts of men, argue much the inward temper and inclination of the heart, and give the beſt account of it. I think if men could reflect upon themſelves, they will find that earthly things are vain, while they put on another beauty, and have a more magnificent repreſentation in their minds; and ſo draw after them the choiceſt of their affections, that they cannot ſpare much real affection for

ſpiritual things, which are apprehended more ightly, and darkly, and make the lighter and more perficial impreſſion. But certainly this will be the oſt natural beating of a holy heart, and the ordiary breathing of it, to deſire much of this ſpiritual eaſure for themſelves and others. You know what e thoughts and diſcourſes of merchants turn moſt pon, it is to have good winds, fair weather, good ercats, and all things that may facilitate gain: nd huſbandmen wiſh for good ſeaſons, timely owers, and dry harveſts, that there may be plenty. And generally what mens hearts are ſet upon, hat they go abroad fervently and inceſſantly in onging deſires after it. Now truly this is the Chriian's inward motion, and this is his ſalutation, herewith he congratulateth others; *The God of ope fill you with all peace and joy in believing*. His ain lies in another airth, his plenty is expected rom another field, and that is from above, from he God of hope, the ſweeteſt name (if all the reſt e anſwerable) to be dealt with all, either for gain r plenty; for it is hope that makes labour ſweet, nd if it anſwer expectation then all is well: therefore in the ſowing the ſeed of prayers, and ſupplications with tears, for this harveſt of joy, and in trafficking for this treaſure of peace, it is good that we have to do with the God of hope, who cannot make us aſhamed; *for he that ſoweth muſt ſow in hope*, 1 Cor ix. 10. And therefore though we ſow in tears, yet let us mingle hope therewith, and the harveſt ſhall be joy, and the plenty affluence of peace in the holy Ghoſt. Now if we believed this, would not our ſorrows be deep, and our labours ſweet.

In the words you have read, there is the higheſt wiſh of a holy heart for himſelf, and them he loves beſt; that one deſire which if he had no occaſion

ever

ever to preſent to God, but once, this he wou
certainly fall upon, or ſome ſuch like, to be fille
after this manner *with all peace and joy in belie*
ing. Theſe are the fruits of the Spirit he deſires t
be filled with, and feed upon; peace as an ordina
meal, and joy as an extraordinary deſert, or a
powerful cordial; and to ſupply what here is wan
ing at preſent, the hope of what is to come, a
that in abundance. This is even an entertainme
that a believer would deſire for himſelf, and the
who have his beſt wiſhes, while he is in this world
he would deſpiſe the delicacies of kings, and refu
their dainties, if he might ſit at this table that
ſpread on the mountain of God's church, a fu
feaſt which fills the ſoul with peace, joy, and hop
as much as now it is capable of. Now theſe precio
fruits you ſee in the words, ſhew the root th
brings them forth, and the branch that immediate
ly bears them. The root is the God of hope, an
the power of the holy Ghoſt, and a ſoul being in
grafted as a living branch by faith into Chriſt, re
ceives vertue to bring forth ſuch pleaſant fruits, ſ
that they grow immediately upon the branch of be
lieving, but the ſap and vertue of both comes fro
the holy Ghoſt, and the God of hope. Or to tak
it up in another like notion, this is the river whic
gladneth the city of God with his ſtreams, that wa
ters the garden of the Lord with its three-fol
ſtream: for you ſee it is parted in three heads, an
every one of them is derived from another. The
firſt in the order of nature is peace, a ſweet, calm
and refreſhing river, which ſometimes overflow
like the river *Nilus*; and then it runs in a ſtrea
of joy, which is the high ſpring-tide: but ordina
rily it ſends forth the comfortable ſtream of hope,
and that in abundance. Now this three-fold rive
hath its original high, as high as the God of hope,

and

d the power of the holy Ghoſt, but the channel it is ſituated low, and it is believing in Chriſt.

To begin then with the firſt of theſe, truly there nothing can be ſpoken that ſounds more ſweetly the ears of men, than peace and joy; they need othing to commend them, for they have a ſuffi-ent teſtimonial, and letters of recommendation ritten upon the affections of all men. For what it that all men labour and ſeek after but this? It not any outward earthly thing that is deſired for elf, but rather for the peace and contentment the ind expects in them; and therefore this muſt be itſelf the proper object or good of the ſoul, which it can be had immediately without that long and ndleſs compaſs about the creatures, certainly a an cannot but think himſelf happy, and will have o miſſing of other things: as if a man could live ealthfully and joyfully without meat, and without l appetite for it, none but they would think him e happieſt man in the world, and would think it o pain to him to want the dainties of princes, but ther that he were delivered from the wearisome eceſſity others laboured under: juſt ſo is it here, ere is nothing would perſuade a man to travel, nd toil all his life-time, about the creatures, and ot to ſuffer his ſoul to take reſt, if he did believe o find that immediately without travel, which he ndures ſo much travel for. And therefore the be-eving Chriſtian is only a wiſe man, who is in-ructed where the things themſelves, true peace nd joy do lie, and ſo ſeeks to be filled with the ings themſelves, for which only men ſeek other ings; and not as other men who catch at the adows, that they may at length find the ſubſtance elf, for this were far about, and labour in vain.

Peace is ſo ſweet and comprehenſive a word, that e *Jews* made their uſual compellation, *Peace be*

unto

unto you; importing all felicity, and the affluen of all good. And indeed our Saviour found no fi ter word to expreſs his matchleſs good-will to th well-being of his diſciples, nor this, Luke xxiv. 3 when he ſaluted them after his reſurrection, *Pea be unto you*, which is as much as if he had wiſhe abſolute ſatisfaction, all contentment and happine that themſelves would deſire. Now this peace ha a relation to God, to ourſelves, and our brethre I will exclude none of them from the preſent wiſh for even brotherly concord and peace, ſuits we with the main ſubject of this chapter, which is th bearing of our neighbours infirmities, and not plea ing ourſelves, and ſuch like mutual duties of ch rity. But certainly the other two relations are mo intrinſick to happineſs; becauſe there is nothin nearer to us than the bleſſed God, and next to hi there is nothing comes ſo near us as ourſelves. Th foundation of all our miſery, is that enmity be tween man and God; which is as if heaven an earth would fall out into an irreconcileable diſcord and upon what ſhould follow the ſuſpenſion of th light of the ſtars, and the withdrawing the influ ences of heaven, and the withholding the refreſh ment of the early and latter rain? If ſuch diſſenſio fell between them, that the heavens ſhould be a braſs to the earth, and would refuſe the cloud when they cry for rain, or the herbs and minera when they crave the influences from above; wha a diſconſolate and irkſome dwelling-place would the earth be? What a dreary habitation would we find it? Even ſo it is between God and men. Al our being, all our well-being hangs upon the good aſpect of his countenance, in his favour is all our life and happineſs; yet ſince the firſt rebellion every man is ſet contrary to God, and in his af fections and actions denounces war againſt heaven.

Whence

Whence hath flowed the ſad and woful ſuſpenſion all theſe bleſſings, and comfortable influences, which only beautify and bleſs the ſoul of man? And now there is nothing to be ſeen, but the terrible countenance of an angry God, the revengeful ſword of juſtice ſhaken in the word; all above us as if the ſun were turned unto blackneſs, and the moon unto blood, and behold trouble and darkneſs, and dimneſs of anguiſh.

Now whenever a ſoul begins to apprehend his enmity and diviſion in ſad earneſt, there follows an inteſtine war in the conſcience; the terrors of God riſe up a terrible party within a man's ſelf, and what is the bitter remembrance of his ſins; theſe are muſtered and ſet in order, in battle-array againſt the man, and every one of theſe as they are thought upon, ſtrike a dart into his heart; they ſhoot an arrow dipped in the wrath of God, *the poiſon whereof drinketh up his ſpirit*, Job vi. 4. Tho' the moſt part of ſouls have now a dead calm, and are aſleep like *Saul* in the field in the midſt of his enemies, or as *Jonas* in the ſhip in the midſt the tempeſt, yet when they awake out of that deep ſtupidity, God will write bitter things againſt them, and make them to poſſeſs their iniquities; and they ſhall find that he hath numbered their ſteps, and watched over their ſin, and ſealed it as in a bag, to be kept in record: then he will renew his witneſſes againſt them, and put their feet in the ſtocks, and they ſhall then apprehend that changes and war are againſt them, and that they are ſet as a mark againſt God, and ſo they will be a burden to themſelves, Job vii. 20. O what a ſtorm will it raiſe in the ſoul! Now to lay this tempeſt, and calm this wind, is the buſineſs of the goſpel, becauſe it reveals theſe glad tidings of peace and reconciliation with God, which can only be the ground of a perfect

fect calm in the conſcience. Herein is the atone-
ment and propitiation ſet forth, that which by it
fragrant and ſweet ſmell hath pacified heaven, an
appeaſed juſtice; and this only is able to pacify th
troubled ſoul, and lay the tumultuous waves of th
conſcience, Eph. ii. 13.--20. Col. i. 19, 20, 21, 22
This gives the anſwer of a good conſcience, whic
is like the ſweet and gentle breathing of a calm
day after a tempeſt, 1 Pet. iii. 21. Now it is no
ſo much God reconcileable to ſinners, as God in
Chriſt reconciling ſinners to himſelf, 2 Cor. v. 19
Though ſome men be always ſuſpicious of God
yet they have more reaſon to ſuſpect their own
willingneſs; for what is all the goſpel, but a de-
claration of his love, and laying down the enmity
or rather that he had never hoſtile affections to his
elect, and ſo was all this while providing a ranſom
for himſelf, and bringing about the way to kill the
enmity, and having done that by the blood of
Chriſt, he will follow us with intreaties of recon-
cilement; and requeſts us to lay down our hoſtile
affections, and the weapons of our warfare, and
for him we have no more ado but to believe his
love, *while we were yet enemies*. This I ſay, carried
into the heart with power, gives that ſweet calm
and pleaſant reſt to the ſoul, after all its toſſings;
this commands the winds and waves of the conſci-
ence, and they obey it. It is true that many find
no trouble within, and ſome upon terrible appre-
henſions of ſin and wrath, find eaſe for the time
in ſome other thing, as a diverſion to ſome other
object, and turning aſide with *Cain* to build cities
to worldly pleaſures, or employments, or company
that the noiſe of them may put the clamours of
their conſcience to ſilence. Some parlies and ceſſa-
tions men have, ſome treaties of this kind for
peace with God; but alas, the moſt part make no
intire

re and full peace, they are always upon making bargain, and cannot cloſe it, becauſe of their gagements to ſin, and their own corrupt luſts; therefore many do nothing elſe than what men in war, to ſeek ſome advantage, or to gain time theſe delays: But oh the latter end will be ſad, en he ſhall arm you againſt yourſelves! were ot better now while it is to day, not to harden ur hearts? Now joy is the effect of peace, and it he very overflowing of it in the ſoul, upon the ly apprehenſion of the love of God, and the ſtimable benefit of the forgiveneſs of ſins. It eace in a large meaſure, preſſed down, and run- over, breaking without the ordinary channel, dilating itſelf to the affecting and refreſhing of that is in man: *My heart and my fleſh ſhall re- ce.* This is the very exuberance, and high ſail- -tide of the ſea of peace that is in a believer's rt; it ſwells ſometimes upon the full aſpect of d's countenance beyond the ordinary bounds, cannot be kept within in gloriation and boaſt- in God. When a ſoul is ſo illuſtrated with the y Ghoſt, as to make a kind of preſence and ſeſſion of what is hoped for, that makes the ſoul enlarge itſelf in joy: this makes the inward jubi- ion, the heart as it were to leap for joy. Now ly this is not the ordinary entertainment of a riſtian; it is neither ſo univerſal, nor conſtant as ce. Theſe fruits ſo matured and ripe, like the pes of *Canaan*, are not ſet down always upon table of every Chriſtian, nor yet at all to ſome; is enough that he keep the ſoul in that healthful mper, that it is neither quite caſt down, or diſ- raged, through difficulties and infirmities: it is ficient if God ſpeak peace to the ſoul, though it not acquainted with theſe raptures of Chriſtiani- This hath ſo much ſenſe in it, that it is not

meet to be made ordinary food, leſt we ſhould
ſtake our pilgrimage for heaven, and fall upon
building of tabernacles in this mount; for certa
the ſoul would conclude it good to be here,
could not ſo earneſtly long for the city and cou
in heaven, if they had any more but ſome taſte
that joy to ſharpen their deſires after the full
ſure of it: it is a fixed and unchangeable ſtatut
heaven, that we ſhould here live by faith, and
by ſenſe. And indeed the following of God fully
the ways of obedience, upon the dim apprehenſi
of faith, is more praiſe-worthy, and hath mor
the true nature of obedience in it, than when
ſent ſweetneſs hath ſuch a predominant influe
beſides, our veſſel here is weak and crazy, and
unfit for ſuch ſtrong liquor, as the joys of the
Ghoſt: Some liquors have ſuch a ſtrong ſpiri
them, that they will burſt an ordinary bottle;
as our Saviour ſays, *No man puts new wine in
bottles, for they will burſt*, Matth. ix. 17. T
the joy of heaven is too ſtrong for our old ruin
and earthly veſſels to bear, till the body *put on
corruption, and be faſhioned like unto Chriſt's
glorious body;* for it cannot be capable of all
fulneſs of this joy: and yet there is a kind of
fulneſs of peace and joy in this life, *be filled
all joy and peace.* Indeed the fulneſs of this life
emptineſs to the next; but yet there is a fulneſs
regard of the abundance of the world, their
and pleaſures, their peace and contentation in
things of this life, are but like *the crackling
thorns under a pot*, that makes a great noiſe,
vaniſhes quickly in a filthy ſecurity, Eccleſ. vii.
It is ſuch that, like the loudeſt *laughter of fo
there is ſorrow at the heart, and in the end of
heavineſs*, Prov. xiv. 13. It is but at the beſt a
perfice, an external garb drawn over the coun
nan

nce, no cordial, nor ſolid thing; it is not heart-
, but a picture and ſhadow of the gladneſs of
heart in the outward countenance; and what-
r it be, ſorrow, grief, and heavineſs follows at
heels, by a fatal inevitable neceſſity: ſo that
re is this difference between the joys and plea-
es of the world, and dreams in the night, for
preſent there is more ſolidity, but the end is
gely different; when men awake out of a dream,
y are not troubled with it, that their imaginary
aſure was not true: but the undivided compa-
n of all earthly joys and contentment, is grief,
d vexation. I wonder if any man would love
t pleaſure or contentment, if he were aſſured to
ve an equal meaſure of torment after it, ſuppoſe
pain of the ſtone, or ſuch like: but when this
ſery is eternal, O what madneſs and folly is it,
plunge into it! *I ſaid of laughter, it is madneſs,
d of mirth what doth it?* But the Chriſtian's
ce and joy is of another nature, yet as no man
oweth *the hidden manna, the new name, and
white ſtone, but he that hath it*, Rev. ii. 17.
no man can apprehend what theſe are, till he
te them, and find them. What apprehenſion
nk ye, can a beaſt form of his own nature? or
at can a man conceive of the angelical nature?
uly this is without our ſphere, and that without
irs. Now certainly the wiſeſt and moſt learned
n cannot form any lively notion of the life of a
riſtian, till he find it; it is without his ſphere,
d comprehenſion, therefore it is called *the peace
God which paſſes all underſtanding*, Phil. iv. 7.
joy unſpeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. Sup-
e men had never ſeen any other light but
ſtars of the firmament, or the light of a candle,
y could not conceive any thing more glorious
n the firmament in a clear night; yet we that

have ſeen the ſun, and moon, know that the
lights are but darkneſs unto them Or, to uſe th
compariſon that the Lord made once effectual
convert a nobleman, that a man did ſee ſome me
and women dancing afar off, and heard not the
muſick, he would judge them mad, or at lea
fooliſh; but coming near hand, and hearing the
inſtruments, and perceiving their order, he chang
his mind: even ſo whatever is ſpoken of the jo
of the Spirit, or the peace of conſcience, and wha
ſoever is ſeen by the world of abſtaining from th
pleaſures of the world, the natural mind canno
but judge it fooliſhneſs, or melancholy; becau
they do not hear that pleaſant and ſweet harmon
and conſort of the word and Spirit, in the ſouls
God's children: elſe if they heard the ſweet Pſa
miſt of *Iſrael* piping, they could not but find a
inward ſtirring, and impulſe in themſelves t
dance too.

Now the third ſtream is hope; *that ye may a
bound in hope*, becauſe this is not the place nor tim
of poſſeſſion; our peace and joy here is often in
terrupted, and very frequently weakened: it is no
ſo full a table as the Chriſtian's deſire requires. Ou
preſent enjoyments are not able to mitigate the ver
pain of a Chriſtian's appetite, or to ſupply h
emptineſs; therefore there muſt be an acceſſion
hope to complete the feaſt, and to pacify the eage
neſs of the ſoul's deſire, till the fulneſs of joy an
peace come: and if he have ſpare diet otherwi
yet he hath allowance of abundance of hope;
take as much of that as he can hold, and that
both refreſhing and ſtrengthening. Truly there
nothing men have, or enjoy, that can pleaſe, witho
the addition of hope unto it. All mens eyes a
forward to futurity, and often men prejudge then
ſelves of their preſent enjoyments, by the gapin

expectatio

pectation of, and looking after things to come. t the Chriſtian's hope being a very ſure anchor ſt within the vail, upon the ſure ground of hea-n, it keeps the ſoul firm and ſtedfaſt; though he not unmoved yet from toſſing or floating, tho' may fluctuate a little, yet his hope regulates and trains it; and it being an helmet, it is a ſtrong ſervative againſt the power and force of temp-ions: it is that which guards the main part of a riſtian, and keeps reſolutions after God untouch-and unmaimed.

Now my beloved, would ye know the fountain d original of theſe ſweet and pleaſant ſtreams? s the God of hope, and the power of the holy hoſt. There is no doubt of power in God, to ke us happy and give us peace; but power ms moſt oppoſite to peace, eſpecially with ene-es: and it ſeems whatſoever he can do yet, that juſtice will reſtrain his power from helping us; there is no doubt but the God of power, as ll as hope, both can and will do it: He hath ſtile from his promiſes, and gracious workings, auſe he hath given us ground of hope in him-, he is the chief object of hope, and the chief ſe of hope in us too, therefore we would look to this fountain, for here all is to be found. But I haſte to ſpeak a word of the third thing poſed, *viz.* The channel that theſe ſtreams run o; It is believing, not doing: indeed this ſtream e ran in this channel; but ſince paradiſe was aced, and the rivers that watered it, turned ano-r way, this hath done ſo too. It is true, that nteouſneſs and holy walking is a notable mean preſerve this pure, and unmixed, and conſtant; indeed the peace of our God will never lodge l with ſin, the enemy of God, nor can that joy ich is ſo pure a fountain, run in abundance in

an impure heart. It will not mix with carnal pl
ſures, and toys, but yet the only ground of true pe
and joy is found out by believing in another: wh
ſoever ye do elſe to find them, diſpute and deb
never ſo long about them, toil all night and all d
in your examinations of yourſelves, yet you ſh
not catch this peace, this ſolid peace, and this ſ
paſſing joy, but by quite overlooking yourſelv
and fixing your hearts upon another object, t
is Jeſus Chriſt. *Peace and joy in believing*, a
what is that believing? Miſtake it not, it is n
particular application at firſt, I delight rather
take it in another notion, for the cordial aſſe
and conſent of the ſoul to the promiſes of the g
pel. I ſay but one word more, *viz.* meditation a
deep conſideration of theſe truths, is certainly
lieving, and believing brings peace, and pe
brings joy.

SERMON X.

Matth. xi. 16. *But whereunto ſhall I liken this*
neration?

WHEN our Lord Jeſus, who had the tongue
the learned, and ſpoke as never man ſpa
did now and then find a difficulty to expreſs
matter herein contained; *What ſhall we do?* T
matter indeed is of great importance, a ſoul-mat
and therefore of great moment, a myſtery,
therefore not eaſily expreſſed. No doubt he kn
how to paint out this to the life, that we mi
rather behold it with our eyes, than hear it w
our ears; yet he uſes this manner of expreſſion
ſtamp our hearts with a deep apprehenſion of
weight of the matter, and the depth of it. It c
co

ns us all, as much as we can, to conſider and end unto it.

Two things are contained here, the entertainnt Chriſt gets in the world, of the moſt part; and entertainment he gets from a few children, of om he is juſtified. I ſay, it concerns you greatly obſerve this, for Chriſt obſerved it very narrowwhat ſucceſs both his forerunner and himſelf . Chriſt begins here to expoſtulate with the ltitudes, and with the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* at it; but ere all be done he will complain to Father: He now complains unto you, that he not ready acceptance amongſt you, if it be ible that you may repent of the great injury e to the Son of God, no not ſo much to Chriſt, your own ſouls; *for all who hate me love death, he that ſinneth againſt me wrongeth his own* , Prov viii. 36. Wo unto your ſouls, for you e not hurt Chriſt, by ſo much deſpiſing him; have not prejudiced the goſpel, but ye have arded evil to yourſelves, Iſa. iii. 9. I ſay, Chriſt complains of you to yourſelves, if ſo be you bethink yourſelves in earneſt, and return to rſelves; but if ye will not, he will at length plain to the Father, when he renders up the dom, and gives an account of his adminiſtraunto God, he will report what entertainment gave his word. For he will ſay, "I have laed in vain, and ſpent my ſtrength for nought ſuch a man; all threatnings, all intreaties ld not prevail with him to forſake his drunken, his ſwearing, his covetouſneſs, his oppreſſions, " You know Chriſt's laſt long prayer, John He gives an account in it what acceptance he among men, when he is finiſhing his miniſtry. ſe are the men he now ſpeaks unto in the text, *reunto ſhall I liken this generation?* Thus he

ſpeaks of them to his Father, *O righteous Fath*
the world hath not known thee, but I have kno
thee. Well then this is not ſo light a matter as
apprehend; ye come to hear daily, but know
not that ye ſhall give an account of your hearin
Know ye not that there is one who obſerves
marks all the impreſſions which the word make
your conſciences? He knows all the blows of
ſword of the word, that returns making no impr
ſion on your conſciences. Chriſt ſays to the m
titudes here, *And what went ye out for to see*
pray you what went ye out to ſee, ſeeing ye h
not believed his report? Why went ye out u
the wilderneſs? Know ye who ſpake, or in wh
authority? May we not ſpeak in theſe terms u
you, when we conſider the little fruit of the g
pel? What do you come to hear, and what do
come to hear every ſabbath, and other ſole
days? I pray you aſk at your own hearts, w
your purpoſe is: Wherefore do ye come toget
ſo often? Men are rational in their buſineſs, t
do nothing, but for ſome purpoſe; they labour,
plow, and ſow, in order to reap; they buy,
ſell, to get gain: they have many projects,
deſigns they ſtill ſeek to accompliſh; and ſhall
be only in matters of ſalvation and damnation
irrational? Shall we in the greateſt thing of
greateſt moment, becauſe of eternal concernm
be as periſhing brutiſh beaſts, that know not w
we aim at? Chriſt will in the end aſk you, W
went ye out of your own houſes ſo often to he
What went ye out to ſee; I pray you what
ye anſwer? If ye ſay, we went to hear the w
of the Lord, then he ſhall anſwer you, and
did not ye obey it? Then why did ye not hea
as my word, and regarded it more? If ye ſhall
We went to hear a man ſpeak ſome good wo

to us, for an hour or two: then is Chriſt alſo engaged againſt you, becauſe he ſent him, and ye deſpiſe him; *for he that deſpiſes me, deſpiſes him that ſent me*: ſo ye ſhall be catched both the ways. If ye think this to be God's word, I wonder why ye do not receive it then, with the ſtamp of his authority in your hearts; why do ye not bow your hearts to it? For it ſhall endure for ever, and judge you. Why do you ſit ſo many fair offers, ſo many ſad warnings? Are not the drunkards warned every day by this word, that the curſe of the Lord ſhall come upon them? Is not every one of you according to your ſeveral ſtations, and circumſtances, warned to forſake your wicked ways, and your evil thoughts, to flee from the wrath to come, before the decree of the Lord paſs forth, and before his fury burn as an oven. And if ye think theſe to be the true words of the eternal God, and the ſayings of the Amen, the faithful and true witneſs, and the truth itſelf; if ye believe it as ye profeſs to do, why do ye not get out of the way of that wrath, which continues upon theſe ſinners daily? Shall ye eſcape the judgment of God? Shall not his word overtake you? Though miniſters that ſpeak unto will not live for ever. But theſe words they ſpeak will ſurely take hold of you, as they did your fathers, that ye ſhall ſay, *Like as the Lord of hoſts hath ſaid he will do unto us, ſo hath he done*, Zech. i. 6. If ye do not think this is God's word, I beſeech you why do you come hither ſo oft? What do ye come to hear? Why take ye ſo much needleſs pains? Your coming here ſeems to ſpeak, that ye think it to be God's word, and yet your converſation declares more plainly that ye believe it not. Yet Chriſt takes notice of you, and that ye, beloved ſearch, that ſo ye might hear the word as in the ſight of the all-ſeeing God, and in his

his ſight who will judge you according to it: a ſer-
mon thus heard, would be more profitable than a
that ever ye heard. Now to what purpoſe ſpeak w
of theſe things unto you, and why do we choo
this diſcourſe, when ye expect to hear public
things? I will tell you the reaſon of it, becauſe
conceive this is the great ſin of the times, and th
moſt reprehenſive and fountain-ſin, the root of a
our profanity, and malignity; even this which
Chriſt points out in this ſimilitude. The great bleſ-
ſing and privilege of *Scotland* is the goſpel, ye al
muſt grant this: now then the great miſery and
ſin of this nation is, the abuſe and contempt of the
glorious goſpel; and if once we could make you
ſenſible of this, ye would mourn for all other par-
ticular ſins.

The words are very comprehenſive, ye ſhall find in them the different manifeſtations of God in his word, reduced to two heads. The Lord either mourns to us to make us mourn, or joys to us to make us dance. A ſimilitude and likeneſs is the end of all the manifeſtations of himſelf, that we be one with him: therefore when he would move our affections in us, he puts on the like, and clothes himſelf in his word and diſpenſation with ſuch a habit as is ſuitable. So ye have both law, and goſpel, he laments in the one, he pipes in the other, both ſad and glad diſpenſations of his providence may be ſubordinate to theſe; the one, I mean his judgments, repreſenting that to our eyes which his law did to our ears, making that viſible of his juſtice, which we heard: the other, I mean mercies, repreſents that to our eyes, which the goſpel did to our ears, and making his good-will, his forbearance, and long-ſuffering, and compaſſion viſible, that men might ſay, *As we have heard, ſo have we ſeen in the city of our God.* Now theſe

ſhould

ould ſtir up ſuitable affections in men, this is their
tendment and purpoſe, to ſtir up joy, and grief,
orrow for ſin on the one hand, and joy in the
ord's ſalvation on the other hand; hatred of ſin
y the one, and the love of Chriſt by the other.

But what is the entertainment theſe get in the
orld? Ye ſhall ſee it different, in ſome it meets
ith different affections, or it makes them, and
oves them, and theſe do juſtify wiſdom; the ac-
ompliſhment and performance of God's purpoſes
n ſouls juſtifies his word, they juſtify Chriſt, by
elieving in him, Chriſt juſtifies us, by making us
o believe in him, and apply his own righteouſneſs
ous. He that believes juſtifies the word, and Chriſt
n the word, becauſe he ſets to his ſeal that God is
rue; and Chriſt likewiſe juſtifies the believer, by
pplying his righteouſneſs unto him. The believer
uſtifies wiſdom, by acknowledging it as the Fa-
her's wiſdom; Chriſt juſtifies the believer by mak-
ng him, and pronouncing him righteous, and a
ſon of God. But in others, and in theſe a great
many, it generally meets with hard hearts, ſtupid,
and inſenſible, incapable of theſe impreſſions. You
know muſick is very apt to work upon mens ſpi-
rits, and doth ſtir up ſeveral paſſions in them, as
joy or grief: now Chriſt and his miniſters are the
Muſicians that do apply their ſongs to catch mens
ears, and hearts, if ſo be they may ſtop their cour-
and not periſh; theſe are bleſſed *Syrens* that do ſo,
and pipe day and night, in ſeaſon, and out of ſea-
ſon, ſome ſad and woful ditties of mens ſin, and
God's wrath, of the day of judgment, of eternal
puniſhment, that if it be poſſible, men may fore-
apprehend theſe ills, before they fall into them
without recovery. Theſe are the boys in the mar-
ket-places that ſtrive to ſadden your hearts, and
make you lament in time, before the day of howl-
ing,

ing, and weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth; theſe alſo have as many joyful and glad ditties, ſweetening the ſad: it may be diverſe men have diverſe parts of this harmony; *John* had the woful and ſad part, Chriſt took the joyful and glad part, ſo the one anſwered the other, and both made a compleat harmony. It may be one man in one ſpring mixes theſe two, and makes good muſick alone; the one part is intended to move men to grief, and mourn once that they may not mourn for ever; the other to comfort in the mean time theſe that mourn, to mix their mourning with the hope of that bleſſed delivery in Jeſus Chriſt. Now what is the entertainment theſe get from the moſt part? They can neither move men to one affection, or other, they will neither mourn, nor dance, and the children complain of ſome rude and ruſtick ſpirits, that are uncapable of muſick, and cannot diſcern one ſpring from another: ſo does Chriſt complain of a generation of men, they can neither repent nor believe, *they care for none of theſe things*; his threatnings and denounciations of wrath are a ſmall thing to them, and his conſolations appear alſo to be inconſiderable: their ſouls are otherwiſe taken up, that they have no ſenſe to diſcern the tranſcendent excellency of eternal things. We would then preſs upon your conſciences theſe three things. *Firſt*, That the word of God comprehending the law and goſpel, contains both the ſaddeſt ditties, and the moſt joyful and ſweet ſongs in the world. Next we would diſcover unto you the great ſin, and extreme ſtupidity of this generation, of which ye are a part, that ye may know the controverſy God hath with the land. And then at length we would labour to perſuade you to the right uſe of this goſpel, and juſtifying of wiſdom, if ye would be his children.

The law is indeed a ſad ſong, and lamentation, it

ſurpaſſes all the complaints and lamentations among men; ye know the voice in which it was given at *Sinai*, it was delivered with great thunders, great terrors, accompanied it. The law is a voice of words, and thunder, which made theſe that heard it intreat that it ſhould not be ſpoken to them any more; for they could not endure the word that was commanded, Heb. xii. 18, 19. Ye would think if they were holy men, they would not be afraid of it, *but ſo terrible was that ſight, and that voice*, that it even made holy *Moſes* himſelf, *exceedingly fear and quake*: it made a great hoſt, more numerous than all the inhabitants of *Scotland*, to tremble exceedingly. And why was it ſo ſad, and terrible? even becauſe it was a law that publiſhes tranſgreſſion, *for by the law is the knowledge of ſin.* If there were no fear of judgment and wrath, yet I am ſure there is none that can reaſonably conſider that excellent eſtate in which he was once in, that throne of eminency above the creatures, that height of dignity in conformity and likeneſs to God, that incomparable happineſs of communion with the ſupreme Fountain of life; now I ſay, none can duely ponder theſe things, but they will think ſin to be the greateſt miſery of mankind: they muſt be affected with the ſenſe of that ineſtimable treaſure they loſt, and how ſad a conſideration is it to view that cloud of beaſtly luſts, of fleſh and earth, that was interpoſed between the Sun of righteouſneſs, and our ſouls, which hath made this perpetual eclipſe, this eternal night and darkneſs. How ſad is it to look upon our ruin, and compare it with that ſtately edifice of innocent *Adam!* How are we fallen from the height of our excellency, and made lower than the beaſts, when we were once but *a little lower than the angels!* But then if ye ſhall conſider all that followed upon this, the innumer-

innumerable abominations of men, ſo contrary that holy law, and God's holineſs, that hath flow from this corrupt fountain, and hath defiled many generations of men, that they are all brui and putrified ſores, and in nothing ſound from t head to the foot; the ſoul within becomes the fi of all pollution, the members without, the condu it runs through, and made weapons of unrigh ouſneſs againſt our Maker. And what a conſider tion is this alone, how vile and ugly doth that ho and ſpiritual law make the moſt refined and poli ed civilian? He that hath pooreſt naturals, m extracted from the dregs of the multitude, and how abominable will he appear in this glaſs, *in t perfect law of liberty?* So that men would deſpi themſelves, and repent in duſt and aſhes, if on they did ſee their own likeneſs, ye would run fro yourſelves, as children that have been taken with their own beauty, but are ſpoiled with t ſmall pox, let them look unto a glaſs, and it w almoſt make them mad. But if we ſhall ſtay, an hear out the trumpet which ſounds louder an louder, there will be yet more reaſon of trembling for it becomes a voice publiſhing judgment an wrath, *for therein is the wrath of God revealed fro heaven, againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſne of men*, Rom. i. 18. It ſpeaks much of all men ſins, *that every mouth may be ſtopped: but the voi waxed louder and louder*, the ſpring grows ſtill ſa der, *that all the world may become guilty befo God*. Rom. iii. 19. It publiſhes firſt the comman and then follows the ſad and weighty curſe of Go *Curſed is every one that abides not in all thing which are written in the law*, Gal. iii. 10. as man curſes as breaches of the law; and what a dreadf ſong is this? *Ye ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſtin deſtruction, from the preſence of the Lord, and t*

glo

ry of his power. If he had ſaid, ye ſhall be eter-
ally baniſhed from God, what an incomparable
s had this been? Men would lead an unpleaſant
e, who had fallen from the expectation of an
rthly kingdom: But what ſhall it be to fall from
e expectation of a heavenly kingdom? But when
ithal there is an eternal pain with that eternal
s, and an incomparable pain, with incomparable
s, everlaſting deſtruction from God's preſence,
ined with this; always to be deſtroyed, and ne-
r to be made an end of: it is the comfort of bo-
ly torments, and even of death itſelf, that it ſhall
e quickly gone, and the deſtruction end in the
ſtruction of the body, and ſo there is no more
ain; but here is an eternal deſtruction, not a dy-
g, and then a death, but an eternal dying with-
t taſting death. Now conſider (if ye can
deed think) what it is to have a law of enmi-
, and a hand-writing of ordinances againſt us!
s many curſes written up in God's regiſter againſt
s, as there were tranſgreſſions of the law multi-
lied, and God himſelf engaged to be againſt us,
have no mercy on us, and not to ſpare us! could
ny heart endure, or any hands be ſtrong, if they
ould duely apprehend this? Would the denoun-
iation of war, the publiſhing of affliction, the ſen-
nce of earthly judges, would they once be re-
embred beſide this? If ye would imagine all the
rments and rackings that have been found out
y the moſt cruel tyrants againſt men, all to be
ntered in on, and all the grief and pain of theſe
ho have died terrible deaths, to be joined in one,
hat would it be to this? It would be but as a
rop of that wrath and vexation, that wicked ſouls
nd in hell, and are drowned into, and that ever-
ſtingly without end.

But we muſt not dwell always at mount *Sinai*,

we

we are called to mount *Zion, the city of the livi*
God, to hear a ſweet and calm voice of peace,
hear the ſweet and pleaſant ſongs of the ſweet P
miſt of *Iſrael*; and of our glorious Peace-mak
Chriſt Jeſus the deſire of all nations, and the bl
ſing of all the families of the earth. His ſong i
joyful ſound, and bleſſed are they that hear it,
am come (ſays Chriſt) *to ſeek and to ſave that whi*
was loſt; I am come to ſave ſinners, and the chi
of ſinners; let all theſe who find their ſpirits ſa
ned by the terrible law, or who find yourſelv
accurſed from the Lord, and cannot be juſtified b
the law of *Moſes*, come unto me, caſt your ſou
upon me, and ye ſhall find eaſe to them. Are
preſſed under the heavy burden of ſin and wrath
Come unto me, and I will give you eaſe, put
over upon me: do ye think yourſelves not weari
nor burdened enough, and yet ye would be quit
ſin and miſery? Do your ſouls deſire to embra
this ſalvation? Come unto me and I will not ca
you out, whoever comes, on whatſoever terms, i
whatſoever condition, I will in no caſe caſt you ou
Do not ſuppoſe caſes to exclude yourſelves, I kno
no caſe; ye who cannot be juſtified by the law
Moſes, come unto me, and ye ſhall be juſtified *fro*
all things from which ye could not be juſtified by th
law of Moſes. Ye who have no righteouſneſs of you
own, and ſee the righteouſneſs of God reveale
with wrath againſt you; now come to me, I hav
a righteouſneſs of God, beſide the law, and wi
reveal it to you: ye have a band of enmity, an
hand-writing of ordinances againſt you, but com
unto me, for I have cancelled it in the croſs, an
ſlain the enmity, ſo it ſhall never do you an
harm. In a word, this is the meſſenger whoſe fe
are beautiful, that publiſhes glad tidings of peace
this is the Mediator, who reconciles us unto Go

Th

whole gospel and covenant of grace is a bundle ecious promises; it is a set of pleasant melo- songs, that may accompany us through our som pilgrimage, and refresh us till we come the city, where we shall all sing the song of Lamb. What a song is liberty to captives and oners, light to them that sit in darkness, open- of the eyes to the blind, gladness of spirit to e who are heavy in spirit? Ye would all think ation and remission of sins a sweet song, but if would discern it, ye would find nothing sweeter the gospel than this redemption from all iniquity, sin itself, and from all kind of misery. How ly and pleasant a thing is that when Christ hath d unto you, the remission of all sins in his own od? then he plays the most sweet spring, the ounciation of sin, and dying to this world, by death and resurrection. Many listen to the song justification, but they will not abide to hear out the song: he is our sanctification, and redemp- , as well as our righteousness; always to omsoever he is pleasant, when he puts his yoke n them, he will be more pleasant in bearing it. osoever gladly hears Jesus singing of righteous- , and holiness, they shall also hear him sing of y, and happiness; these who da e at the ings of righteousness and sanctification, what eternal triumph and exultation waits on them, en he is singing the song of complete redemp- n!

Are these things so? Is this the law, and this gospel? Do they daily sound in our ears, and at entertainment I pray you, do they get from generation? Indeed Christ's complaint hath e here, whereunto shall our generation be liken- ? For he hath lamented to us, and we have not urned, he hath piped to us, and we have not

danced; we will neither be made glad nor ſad
theſe things. How long hath the word of the L
been preached unto you, and whoſe heart trem
at it? *Shall the lion rore, and the beaſts of the*
not be afraid? The lion hath rored often to
God hath ſpoke often, who will not fear! and
who doth fear! Shall a trumpet be blown in
city, in congregations every day, that terr
trumpet of mount *Sinai* that proclaims war
tween God and men, and yet will not the peo
be afraid? Amos iii. 6, 8. Have not every one
you heard your tranſgreſſions told you? Are
not guilty of all the breaches of God's holy la
Hath not the curſe been pronounced againſt
for theſe, and yet who believes the report? Ye
not do ſo much as to ſit down and examine y
own guiltineſs, till your mouth be ſtopped, a
till ye put it in the duſt before God's juſtice. A
when we ſpeak of hell unto you, and of the cur
of God paſſed upon all men, you bleſs yourſel
in your own eyes, ſaying, *Peace, peace, even*
ye walk in the imagination of your own hearts,
ſin to ſin, and drunkenneſs to thirſt, Deut. xxix.
Now when all this is told you, that many ſhall
condemned, and few ſaved, and that God is ri
teous to execute judgment, and render vengea
on you, ye ſay within yourſelves, for God's ſa
is all this true? But where is the mourning at
lamentations, when there is no feeling or believi
them to be true? Your minds are not convinc
of the law of God, and how ſhall your hearts
moved! Chriſt Jeſus laments unto you, he weep
over Jeruſalem, *How often would I have gathe*
thee, and thou wouldeſt not! What means he; c
tainly he would have you to ſympathize with yo
own condition, when he that is in himſelf bleſſe
and needs not us, is ſo affected with our miſery. H
ſhou

...ld we ſympathize with our own miſery, God ...s to be affected with it, though there be no ...ow of turning in him; yet he clothes his ...ds with ſuch affections, *Why will ye die? O ...my people had hearkened unto me!* He ſounds ...proclamation before the ſtroke, if it be poſſible ...ove you to ſome ſenſe of your condition, that ...cerns you moſt nearly. Yet who judges himſelf ...he may not be judged? The miniſters of the ...d, or Chriſtians may put to their ear, and ...rken to men in their retiring places, but who ...ents in duſt and aſhes, and ſays, *What have I ...e?* Jer. viii. 6. But every man goes on in his ...rſe without ſtop: the word ye hear on the ...bath-day againſt your drunkenneſs, your op...ſſions, your covetouſneſs, your formality, &c. ...doth not lay any bands on you to keep you from ...ſe things. Long may we hearken to you in ſe...t, ere we hear many of you mourn for theſe ...ings, or turn from them. Where is he that is ...raid of the wrath of God, though it be often de...unced againſt him? Do not men ſleep over their ...me, and dream of eſcaping from it? Every man ...th a refuge of lies he truſts in, and will not for...ke his ſins.

Again on the other hand, whoſe heart rejoices ...ithin them to hear the joyful ſound; becauſe men ...o not receive the law, and mourn when he la...ments, they cannot receive the goſpel, it cannot be ...ad news to any but the ſoul that receives ſad tid...ngs, the ſentence of death in its boſom. There...ore Chriſt Jeſus is daily offered, and as often ...eſpiſed, as a thing of nought, and of no value. ...e hear every day of deliverance from eternal ...rath, and a kingdom purchaſed unto you, and ye ...re no more affected, than if we came and told ...ou ſtories of ſome *Spaniſh* conqueſt, that be...

longed not unto you. Would not the ears and he
of ſome men, be more tickled with idle and unpro
able tales, (that are for no purpoſe, but driving a
the preſent time) than they are with this ever
ing ſalvation. Some men have more pleaſure
read an idle book, than to ſearch the holy ſcriptu
though in them this ineſtimable jewel of eternal
be hid. The vain things of this preſent world h
a voice unto you of pleaſure, and profit, and
dit; they will pipe unto you, and ye will liſten u
their ſound; *but ye know not that the dead are th
and that it is the way to the chambers of hell.* Th
indeed are *Syrens* that intice paſſengers by the w
with their ſweet ſongs; and having allured the
to follow, lead them to periſhing. Here is the voi
that is come down from heaven, the *word t
was with God; and he is the way, the truth, a
the life*: He is gone before you, and undertak
to guide you, he comes and calls upon ſimple me
the Father's Wiſdom calls the ſimple ones to u
derſtand wiſdom, to find life and peace, will
then ſo far wrong your own ſouls, as to refuſe i
And yet the moſt part are ſo buſied with this worl
and their own luſts, that the ſweeteſt and pleaſan
eſt offers in the goſpel ſound not ſo ſweet un
them, as the clink of their money, or the ſound
oil and wine in a cup; any muſician would affe
them more than the ſweet ſinger of Iſrael, the
nointed of the God of Jacob: always theſe ſou
that have mourned and danced according to Chriſt
motions, and whoſe hearts have exulted with
them, at the meſſage and word of reconciliation
bleſſed are ye, ye are of another generation, chi
dren of wiſdom: ye who deſire to hear his voice
*Let me hear thy voice, O thou that dwells in th
gardens, the companions hear thy voice, for thy voi
is ſweet, and thy countenance is comely.* If this b
th

voice of thy heart, bleſſed art thou, thou may
eed dance, who hath rejoiced in his ſalvation,
who hath mourned at his lamentation; thy
cing is but yet coming, for his piping is but yet
ning, when all the companies of wiſdom's chil-
n, ſhall be gathered together in that general
mbly of the firſt-born, Chriſt Jeſus the head of
principalities, and in ſpecial the head of the
y the church, ſhall lead the ring; and there
ll be eternal praiſes and ſongs of thoſe that fol-
the Lamb, they ſhall echo into him, who
ll begin that ſong of the hallelujah, *Salvation,*
ing, honour, glory, and power to the Lamb, &c.
Now whereunto ſhall this generation be likened,
t are not affected with theſe things? What
nge ſtupidity and ſenſeleſneſs is it, that men
not affected with things of ſo great and ſo near
cernment? It would require the art of men to
reſs the obſtinacy of ſome Chriſtian profeſſors,
rather a pen ſteeped in hell. He would be thought
atural, that would not grieve at his friend's
th, or loſs; and what ſhall it be called that
n will not ſympathize with themſelves, that is
ir ſouls. If we ſpeak to you of corporal calami-
, and ye could not be moved, it were great ſe-
ity; but what ſtupidity is it, that men will not
ſider their own ſouls? What ſhall ye profit,
e loſe your precious ſouls, and be caſt away? It
he greateſt loſs that is told you, and the greateſt
n. Your affections are moved with periſhing
gs, every thing puts them up or down, and
s the balance with you. What deep ignorance
inconſideration is it, that ye who can mourn
loſs of goods, of children, of health, of friends,
t ye cannot be moved to ſorrow for the ſin of
r ſoul, for the eternal loſs of your ſoul? O-
ſorrows cannot profit you, but this is the only

profitable mourning. If ye were told your sin
misery to make you despair, and mourn eter
ye had some excuse to delay, and forget it as
as ye can; but when all this is told you that
may escape from it, will ye not consider it w
ye are desired to mourn, that ye may be comfo
for ever, will ye not mourn? We would have
to anticipate the day of judgment, that ye
judge yourselves, and then you shall not be jud
What folly and madness is this to delay it till
less, irremediless mourning come, a day that
no light mixed with darkness? These that
mourn at that law, and for their sin, and dan
at the promises of the gospel, may well be c
children of wisdom; and oh, how may this g
ration be said to be begotten of foolishness, as t
father, and wildness as their mother; for is t
any such folly as this, to lose a man's self abso
ly and irrecoverably, for that which they ca
have always? Is there any such folly as to re
this healing medicine, for the little bitterness w
is in it, and then to incur eternal death?

Now what should we do then? What doth
word of God call you to do? This is it, to mo
ing and rejoicing, and this is to justify wisdo
these two are the pulse of a Christian, accordi
he finds his grief and joy, so is he. All of you h
these affections, but they are not right placed,
are not pitched upon suitable objects. The wo
ling hath no other joy but carnal mirth, no o
grief but that which is carnal; these are lim
within the bounds of time: some loss, or s
gain, some pleasure or pain, some honour or di
nour, these are the poles all his affections turn a
on. Now then we exhort and beseech you, a
would flee from the wrath to come, consider it
and fear it; as ye would not partake with this
tow

ward generation in their plagues, ſo be not like em in their ſtupidity. Ye are called to conſider ur ſins and God's wrath, that ye may turn unto e Lord, and then you will hear the voice of peace ying unto thee, *Be of good comfort, thy ſins are given thee.* If ye would ſubmit unto the juſtice God, or unto the holineſs and righteouſneſs of s law in condemning you, you juſtify wiſdom in rt; but ye who have juſtified wiſdom thus far, not condemn wiſdom after it: juſtify the goſpel believing upon Jeſus Chriſt. Receive it as a true d faithful ſaying with your hearts, and this ſhall ſtify you: and if ye juſtify the wiſdom of God preſcribing the righteouſneſs of Chriſt unto you, will alſo juſtify wiſdom in preſcriving a rule of olineſs and obedience unto you, and count all his ths pleaſantneſs and peace. Ye muſt dance at the mmandments, as well as the promiſes, becauſe l God's precepts are really promiſes; ye have noing to do but to believe them, as the way, and en to dance until ye all ſing the ſong of the *Lamb* ith the ſaints above.

Now if ye believe his law and goſpel, and be itably affected with theſe, ye are led alſo to ſymathize with all the diſpenſations of his providence. oth God lament to you in his works, as well as his ord? O then Chriſtians, we exhort you to mourn. et mourning becauſe of his lamentable provience, ſhould be joined with rejoicing in his word; *od hath ſpoken in his holineſs, I will rejoice.* We e a ſtupid generation, that can neither ſee, nor ear, neither can we be affected with what we ſee, r hear; do not his judgments go forth as a lamp at burneth, yet who conſiders? Doth not the on roar, but who is afraid? Is there not a voice ubliſhing affliction? Hath not God's rod a loud oice, and yet who hears it, who fears? We do

not receive agreeable impreſſions of the Lo
dealing with us, but every man puts the da
evil far from him; he will not apprehend pub
rods, till they become perſonal, and therefore t
muſt become perſonal. If ye were mourning i
penitent manner, as a repenting ſoul lame
would not our faſt-days have more ſoul afflict
attending them? If ye did dance as God pipes
his providence, would not our ſolemn feaſts h
more ſoul-rejoicing, and heavenly mirth? A
for that deep ſleep that has fallen upon ſo ma
Chriſtians! How few ſtir up themſelves to t
hold upon God, tho' he hides his face, and thre
neth to depart from us? *For the Lord is with*
while ye are with him; if ye ſeek him, and ſea
for him with all your heart, you will find him,
if ye forſake him, he will forſake you.

SERMON XI.

1 Tim. i. 5. *Now the end of the Commandment*
love, out of a pure heart, and a good conſcien
and faith unfeigned.

IN this chapter the Apoſtle, after the inſcripti
of this epiſtle, repeats a former commandme
that he had given to *Timothy*, how he ſhould bo
teach himſelf, and by his authority (committed t
to him by an extraordinary commiſſion) ſee th
other miniſters teach ſo alſo. *Paul* almoſt in all
epiſtles, ſets himſelf againſt legal preachers, a
falſe teachers. It was a common error in the p
mitive times, to confound the law, and grace,
the point of righteouſneſs, or to make free juſtifi
tion, inconſiſtent with the moral law. Therefo
our Apoſtle makes it his chief ſtudy to vindic

he doctrine of the goſpel, he preaches the goſpel, nd yet is no *Antinomian*, he preaches the law, and et is no legal preacher; he exalts Chriſt more than he *Antinomian* can do, and yet he preſſes holineſs nore than the mere legaliſt can do. He excludes he law in the point of juſtification and pardon, nd then brings it in again to the juſtified man's and. If theſe words were rightly underſtood, and nade uſe of, it would put an end to the many uſe- eſs controverſies of the preſent time, and reform nany of our practices.

There are as many practical abuſes among Chri- tians concerning the law, and the goſpel, as there re ſpeculative errors among other ſects. In the ormer he more particularly directs him what to ake a care of, that men may neither ſpend their own, or their neighbours time, in fooliſh, unneceſ- ary, or impertinent queſtions, that tend nothing o the edification of the body of Chriſt; or in build- ng them up in our moſt holy faith, the doctrine f Chriſt Jeſus, and faith in it. And in this verſe, e ſhews the true meaning and purpoſe of the aw, and commandment, when he meets theſe octors, and draws an argument againſt them from heir own doctrine. They boaſted of the law, and were counted very zealous of it; but as it is ſaid f the Jews, *they had a zeal of God, but not accord- ng to knowledge, becauſe they did not ſubmit unto hr righteouſneſs of God.* They were alſo zealous or the commandment, but neither God, nor the ommandment would give them thanks; why, be- auſe they wholly miſtake and pervert the meaning nd purpoſe of the law, as long as they make the aw inconſiſtent with the goſpel, or would mix it ith it, in the point of juſtification; they do it not nto edification in faith (as it is read) and as they ught to do, verſes 4, 5, 6. We think this evan-

gelick

gelick ſentence, but rawly, yea legally exponed b
many, when they look upon the words as they l
here, *the end of the commandment is love, for lo*
worketh no evil, and is the fulfilling of the wh
law; and this love is deſcribed to be pure an
ſincere, by the following properties. But we con
ceive the main buſineſs is not to deſcribe love, o
to oppoſe this unto their contentions about triflin
queſtions: we chooſe rather to underſtand the te
another way, according to the order of nature
which alſo the words themſelves give ground fo
The end of the commandment is love out of a pu
heart, out of faith unfeigned. So then according
the phraſeology and meaning of the words love
not firſt, but faith muſt be firſt, and primarily in
tended; ſo that the ſenſe of the words is this, Th
end of the commandment is unfeigned faith, fro
whence flows a good conſcience, a pure heart, an
love: or the end of the commandment is faith
which is proved unfeigned by theſe effects, that
gives the anſwer of a good conſcience, it purifie
the heart, worketh by love. The effect of fait
which is love, being to our knowledge more ſen
ſible than faith itſelf. We think it then more na
tive to make a pure heart, and love, marks of un
feigned faith; nor faith and a good conſcience th
marks of love. This expoſition is yet more con
firmed by parallel places, Rom. x. 4. *The end o*
the law is Chriſt for righteouſneſs, unto them tha
believe; this is moſt principally intended, an
even before love. Now it is all one to ſpeak o
faith, as to ſpeak of Chriſt; for faith and Chri
are inſeparably joined, and faith comes not as
conſideration in the goſpel, abſtracted from Chri
the object of it, (as ſome enemies of Chriſt affirm
it juſtifies us not as an act or work, but as an in
ſtrument, whereby we apprehend Chriſt and hi

righte

righteouſneſs. For faith abſtracted from Chriſt, is but an empty notion, and among the dung and loſs, that *Paul* would quite to be found in Chriſt, Phil. iii. 7, 8, 9. Now this ſenſe only fits the ſcope and purpoſe, and leads on ſtrongly againſt the falſe teachers. When *Paul* brings his argument from the law, which they defended againſt the goſpel, they made the commandment to contradict the goſpel, *Paul* makes the commandment to contradict them, and agree with the goſpel; and to be ſo far from diſagreeing with it, that it hath a great affinity with it, as the mean to the end: as that which is unperfect, without its own complement and perfection. Faith in Jeſus Chriſt alone for ſalvation, quieting a man's conſcience, is the very intent of the law; and the command was never given ſince *Adam*, to juſtifie men by obedience to it, but to purſue men after Chriſt. And to ſatisfy you more fully, and clear it up, he ſays, tho' the end of the command be not to juſtify, but to purſue a man from it to Chriſt, yet the command ſuffers no prejudice by this means; but rather is eſtabliſhed by faith, the end of it: becauſe this faith perſuades the heart, and makes a man obey out of love to God, whereas before it ſhould never had gotten any obedience, while men ſought ſalvation by it.

You ſee then, there is an admirable harmony and conſent between theſe things that are ſet at variance, both in the opinion, and practice of the times; for what ſeems more contrary, than the curſing commanding law, and the abſolving promiſing goſpel, yet here they are agreed? Doth not juſtice go croſs to mercy in the ordinary notion? Yet here there is a friendly ſubordination of juſtice to mercy, of the law to the goſpel. Behold how faith is environed with the law, commanding and

curſing

curſing on the one hand, and obedience to th command on the other hand; how faith is th middle party, a good conſcience could neither mee with the command ſince *Adam's* f ll; a pure hear and the obedience of love, had caſt n out with th command; but here is the union, the meeting o old friends: faith is the mediator, as it were, an the goſpel comes between them, and ſo they dar meet again: Chriſt Jeſus who is our peace to mak two one, comes in the middle, and takes away th difference. The law never meets with an obedien ſervant, or friend, till it meet firſt with Chriſt; i can find none righteous in all the world, none up right. Here you have the law's command and curſe reconciled with the goſpel's promiſe; and abſolu tion reconciled with new obedience unto the com mands: the command leading to Chriſt, and Chriſt leading the man juſt back again to the command; the command ſerving Chriſt's deſign, and Chriſt ſerving the command: and this is the round that the believer ſhall go about in, until ſin ſhall be no more; he ſhall be put over from one hand, to a nother, till Chriſt ſhall be all in all; the command ſhall put him to Jeſus, and Chriſt ſhall lead him back again under a new notion to his old maſter.

We may conſider in the text a twofold relation, that faith ſtands in; the relation of an end, and of a cauſe; faith hath the relation of an end unto the commandment; of a cauſe unto a good conſcience, and a pure heart, and love: for theſe are ſaid to be out of faith, which notes this dependance of a cauſe and fountain. The command is for faith, and a pure heart, and love are from faith. We ſhall uſe no other diviſion, but conſider the method of theſe effects that flow from faith: There is an order of emanation and dependance; there is a chain here; the firſt link neareſt faith is a good

conſci-

conſcience, the ſecond link is a pure heart, the third is love, the hand follows the heart, and the heart follows the conſcience.

We need not be ſubtile in ſeeking our purpoſe in theſe words, we think there is more in the plain words than we can ſpeak of: We ſhall only reſolve the verſe in theſe propoſitions, without more obſervation. *Firſt*, Faith in Jeſus Chriſt is the end of the commandment, or law. *Secondly*, There is a faith feigned, and a faith unfeigned, a true and a falſe faith. *Thirdly*, Unfeigned faith, gives the answer of a good conſcience. *Fourthly*, Faith purging the conſcience, purifies the heart. *Fifthly*, Faith purifying the heart, works by love. Here then is the ſubſtance of all the goſpel, and all this makes up an intire complete end; faith purifying the heart, purging the conſcience, and working by love, is the end of the commandment.

1*ſt*, The end of the commandment or law, (for a part is put for the whole) is faith in Chriſt, or Jeſus Chriſt apprehended by faith, which is all one; for ye cannot abſtract faith from Chriſt, for the whole goſpel is a ſhadow without him: grace and glory is but a beam of the Sun of righteouſneſs, that if ye come between it and Chriſt, it evaniſhes preſently, Rom. x. 4. *Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every one that believes*; and if Chriſt be end of the law, then faith is the end of it, becauſe faith is the profeſſion of Chriſt, and union with him. But conſider (1.) That the end is not taken here for the conſumption or deſtruction of a thing; Chriſt is not the end of the law in that ſenſe: though indeed (if the *Antinomian* ſpeak ingenuouſly) his ſenſe would be this, Chriſt makes an end of the law, contrary to Chriſt's own expreſs meaning, *I came not to deſtroy the law, but to fulfil it*, Matth. 5. 17. (2.) The end is either the intention or ſcope

of

of a thing; the original word imports both. (3.) There is an end principally and directly intended in the thing, or work itſelf, and an end adventitious, and of the work. We may ſpeak either of the end the law of its own nature is ordained unto, or the end of the Law-giver in promulgating the law, theſe may be different. Next concerning the law, conſider (1.) That the law may be taken ſtrictly in a limited ſenſe, as it comprehends only the command, and the promiſe of life, and the curſe on the breach of it; and in this ſenſe, it is frequently taken in *Paul's* epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and oppoſed to faith and the goſpel as the goſpel contains promiſes of ſalvation to penitent ſinners. Or, (2.) It may or uſeth to be ſo extended as to comprehend all the adminiſtration made under *Moſes*, or all God's mind revealed under the old Teſtament: now in this ſenſe it comprehends the goſpel, and covenant of grace in it, as we ſhall hear. (1.) Faith in Chriſt is the intention and ſcope of the law: indeed faith in Jeſus is not the intention of the law itſelf, as it is only made up of commandments, promiſes, and curſes; ſo the law as it commands, hath nothing to do, but to be a rule and obligation to men, and as it curſes it condemns men, and ſpeaks nothing of Jeſus Chriſt, or a way to make up the breach of the law. The goſpel is not contained in the law, but rather accidental to it; for Jeſus Chriſt comes with the goſpel, as if ſome unexpected cautioner would come in, when the Judge is as the angel that held *Abraham's* hand, when he was to ſlay his ſon, and offer him up a burnt-offering, giving ſentence to deliver him, it is an exception from the curſe. Be

Secondly, Chriſt is directly intended and pointed out by the law; if ye conſider the whole adminiſtration of *Moſes*, that is the law and covenant

work

orks, though it was preached after the fall, yet it s never preached alone without the gospel, and consider the whole administration of God's mind d ordinances, Christ is principally aimed at; for, .) The doctrine *Moses* delivered in mount *Sinai* ntained a covenant of grace: if you look to the eface of the ten commandments, it is even the ief gospel-promise, and article of the covenant. or how could God come in terms with men after n, but in terms of grace, and in no other terms n man stand before God, nor God be his God. nd likewise seeing the gospel was preached in pa-dise, and afterwards to *Abraham*, God could not e false in his promise made to *Abraham*, neither uld the promulgation of the law that followed, ake that null which went before, Gal. iii. 17. What meant all the ceremonial law? It shadowed nt Jesus Christ the only sacrifice and propitiation, nd this is the sum of the gospel-salvation to peni-nt believing in Christ, and looking through the crifices unto him, and thus *David's* righteousness as the imputation of righteousness, and not in-erent holiness, Psal. xxxii. 1, 2. Rom. iv. 5. But .) It uses to be a question, whether the law de-vered upon mount *Sinai* was a covenant of works r not; some say that the law which was delivered pon mount *Sinai* was indeed a covenant of works, hough they confess it was preached with the cove-ant of grace, and not delivered to them to stand y it, or of intention to get righteousness by it; ut to be subservient to the covenant of grace. O-ers speak absolutely that the law upon mount *inai* was a covenant of grace. We conceive this but a contention about words; the matter is clear itself, (1.) That neither is now the gospel preach-d without the law, as ye may see in Christ's ser-on upon the mount, and his sermon to the young man

man, Matth. chapters v, vi, vii. Mark x, 17. N
yet was then the law preached without the goſpe
as ye may ſee in Exod. chap. xx. the preface
the commandments, and the ſecond comman
contains much of the goſpel in them, Deut. xx
6, 7, &c. compared with Rom. x. 6, &c. Whe
Paul notes both the righteouſneſs of faith and
the works of the law. (2.) Theſe who ſay the la
on mount *Sinai* was a covenant of works, do n
aſſert that God gave it to be a covenant of work
out of intention that men ſhould ſeek ſalvatio
thereby; but they make it only a ſchool-maſter
lead us unto Chriſt, and to diſcover our ſinful cond
tion: and theſe who ſay it was a covenant of grace
conſider it in relation to God's end of ſending i
and as it takes in all the adminiſtration, and doc
trine of *Moſes*. So there needs be no difficulty here
the matter ſeems clear, that the covenant of work
was preached by *Moſes*, and ſo it was by *Paul*
Rom. x. Gal. iii. and that neither *Paul*, nor *Moſe*
preached the covenant of works, but as a broke
covenant; not as ſuch that men could ſtand unto
or be ſaved by. No man can preach the goſpel
unleſs he preach the covenant of works, not be
cauſe both concur to the juſtification of a ſinner
but becauſe the knowledge of a man's own loſt
condition under the one, preſſes him to flee to the
other.

Now I ſay, Chriſt Jeſus, or faith in him, is the
ſcope and intention of the law; it is the ſcope and
intention of the Law-giver, in giving out the law
God hath never given a command or curſe ſince
Adam's fall, but for this end, to bring ſinners un
to Chriſt. This is the end revealed, and appointed
by him in his word; this we ſhall clear from ſome
texts of ſcripture, becauſe it is very material, Rom
v. 20, 21. It might be queſtioned from the forme
words

rds, ſince death hath reigned before *Moſes*, for
against nature's light, what means the new
ry of the written law? What was the end of
promulgation of it on mount *Sinai?* He an-
ers, *the law entered that ſin might abound*; that
he world knew not ſin, the letters of nature's
ht were worn out and ruſty: men thought not
their miſerable condition by nature, and did not
rge themſelves before God; therefore a new
tion and publication of the law muſt be given,
t all men may know how much they owe, and
w they were guilty in a thouſand things they
er dreamed of: But wherefore ſerves this? *That*
ce might ſuper-abound where ſin had abounded;
Lord would have ſin abounding in mens know-
ge, and their charge to be great and weighty,
r God's pardoning grace might be more conſpi-
ous, and the diſcharge more ſweet. We alſo
rn, Gal. iii. 19. that the ſame queſtion was mov-
Wherefore then ſerves the law? Seeing the co-
nant of grace was preached to *Abraham*, What
ant the publiſhing of a covenant of works upon
ount *Sinai?* He anſwers, *It was added becauſe*
tranſgreſſion, till the ſeed ſhould come, to whom
promiſe was made: and as it is ſaid, Rom. v.
For until the law ſin was in the world, it a-
nded in all places of the world before the law
ne; but men did not impute it unto themſelves,
condemn themſelves as guilty: therefore the
was added to diſcover many hidden tranſgreſ-
ns, and to ſhew them the curſe they deſerved.
w this law is not againſt the promiſe or cove-
t of grace, ver. 21. which it behoved to be, if it
e not given of intention to drive men to Chriſt.
the 22 ver. ſpeaks out clearly the end of it,
ſcripture hath concluded all men under ſin, and
er the curſe both; to what end? *That the pro-*

miſe by faith in Chriſt might come, or be give
believers. And ver. 23 *The law was a ſchoolm*
and teacher, to lead us unto Chriſt. The very
trine of a command impoſſible for man to
was, as it were, a proclamation of Chriſt Jeſu
him, a complete teaching of the neceſſity of
other way of ſalvation. The law exacted obedi
rigorouſly, even ſuch as we could not perform,
curſed every degree of diſobedience; this, if t
were no more, ſpeaks that a man cannot ſtan
ſuch terms, and therefore he muſt flee to
Chriſt, who mends the broken covenant.

Again the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. iii. 13, 14. whil
ſpeaks of the excellency of the miniſtry of the
pel, beyond the miniſtry of *Moſes*, notwithſt
ing all the material glory that accompanied
miniſtration, as the ſhining of *Moſes* face, &c.
he opens up a great myſtery here, *Moſes* face
ing while he was with God upon the mount,
holds forth the glory of the law as in reſpec
God, by counſels and inventions they ſaw no
but temporal mercies in it, and were not abl
fix their eyes on that glory; the carnal *Iſrae*
did not break through the miniſtry of the law
death, to ſee Jeſus there, becauſe a vail was u
their hearts: they thought God had been dea
with them in the terms of a covenant of works,
they would ſtand to all God had ſaid, and un
took indeed very fairly, *all which God hath c*
manded, we will do, and be obedient. But tho
they perverted God's meaning of the law, and
not ſee Jeſus intended; for they did not look
faſtly to the end of that myſtery. Now what w
the vail hid them from? *For the ſame vail is y*
them to this day, while they read Moſes and
prophets, and when they ſhall be converted it
be done away in Chriſt, they ſhall then ſee hi

s law: So then the end of this miniſtry of the was Jeſus Chriſt, and this they could not be

Now from all this, it is very clear, that Jeſus riſt, or faith in him, was the great purpoſe and of the law, and covenant of works, The world lying in ſin, and none ſought God, no not neither knew they well what ſin was, there- God ſends his goſpel from mount *Sinai*, publiſhes his law in a terrible manner, that might know the way and manner of the they ſerved, and ſee that their obligation was nitely beyond their ability, or performance; poor ſouls they clearly miſtake the matter, and d to the terms of the covenant of works, as if y were able to perform them. But God did not e them ſo, for he adds a ceremonial law, and rifices, to ſhadow out Chriſt Jeſus. Now, ſays d, tho' ye have undertaken ſo well, yet I know better than ye do yourſelves, ye will never one word of what you ſay; therefore when a, bring a ſacrifice, and look to my Son, the mb that is to be ſlain, and offered up, and ye ll have pardon in him.

Secondly, Chriſt Jeſus apprehended by faith, is accompliſhment and perfection of the law (1.) cauſe Chriſt Jeſus, or faith laying hold upon him, compliſhes the ſame end that the law was ordain- for of itſelf. The law was appointed to juſtify n, that it might be a rule of righteouſneſs ac- ding to which men might ſtand before God, and e. Now when the law was weak through the h, and could not give life, Rom. viii. 3. Gal. 21, and the law ordained to life, wrought more ath, and made ſin exceeding ſinful, Rom. vii. 11, 12. therefore Jeſus Chriſt came in the fleſh, do what the law was unable to do, and to bring

many ſons unto glory, that the juſt might live
faith, Gal. iii. 11. The law ſhould never have
ten its end, no man ſhould have ſtood before G
but the curſe only would have taken place,
the promiſe would have been of no effect. Th
fore Jeſus comes, and gives obedience to the l
and delivers men from the curſe of it, and by f
puts men in as good, and even in a better co
tion, than they would have been by the promi
ſo that the juſtified ſinner may come before God,
well as innocent *Adam*, and have as great co
dence and aſſurance, and peace by faith, as he co
have had by inherent holineſs. Imputed righteo
neſs comes in as a covering over the man's nak
neſs, and doth the turn of perfect inherent h
neſs.

(2) Chriſt, or faith laying hold on him, is t
end or accompliſhment of the law, becauſe faith
Chriſt fulfils the righteouſneſs of the law, in reſp
of a believer's perſonal obedience; although t
believer gave not perfect obedience, and ſo cann
ſtand in terms of juſtice, yet he gives ſincere a
upright obedience, which the law ſhould never ha
got. The command wrought ſin and death,
occaſion of corruption, and never ſhould any po
of it be fulfilled by men; for as long as the cur
was ſtanding, no obedience could be acceptable t
juſtice was ſatisfied, and though that might ha
been diſpenſed with, yet there is none that are rig
teous, none ſeek after God: no good principles
obedience were in us, but all are corrupt, and ha
done abominable works, and all our righteouſne
is as a menſtruous cloth; and though upright ob
dience could have been yielded, yet the law exact
perfect obedience. But now faith in our Redeem
abſolves a man from the curſe of the law, ſo th
now he is not looked upon as an enemy, but
friend

nd; and then it puts a man upon obedience to command from new motives, and principles: thus *the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, walk after the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 4. And that perfect obedience is accepted of God, and reved off his hand, by vertue of the sacrifice and nement of Christ. The law would accept of no no not of nine commandments, if the tenth broken. But now God in Christ accepts of envours and minting, and so is the law in some or other accomplished, and faith leads a man till he be perfected; he walks by faith from ngth to strength, till he appear before God, and made holy as he is holy. Faith in Christ is the of the law,

3.) Because whatever faith wants of perfect and onal obedience, it makes it up in Christ's obece; and thus is the law thoroughly accomplishfor what it wants in the believer, it gets in ist. *Paul* would have the *Romans* take this way, n. vi. 11. *Likewise reckon ye yourselves dead in unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus ist.* Ye may gather by good consequence, that Christ hath died to sin as a publick person, so hould die with him unto sin, and mortify sin him: and thus may ye have consolation aist your imperfect personal mortification, ye thoroughly mortified in Christ. So the beer may look unto Jesus, as one who hath given dience even unto the death, and that not in his name but for us; that the imperfect holiness, obedience of every sound believer, may have complete righteousness to cover it, and come the Father's eye. And this is the law fulfilled, this way doth faith not make void, but esta- the law, Rom. iii. 31. And as the law got r satisfaction in the sufferings of Christ, *who*

became a curſe for us, than in all the puniſh
we could endure; ſo it gets more ſatisfaction t
command by his obedience, than if our perſona
been perfect. *Chriſt was made under the law,*
we might receive the adoption of ſons, Gal. i
and the Son's being made under the law is of
worth, than all our being under it. Now faith
that obedience of God-Man in the law's h
when we do God's will he brings out Chriſt
Lo, (ſays he) *I come, I delight to do thy will,*
xl. 7, 8, 9. In a word, faith in Jeſus accompl
the law, in the commands, in the promiſe, i
curſe, as might be eaſily ſhewn, if your time w
allow.

(1.) In the curſe, becauſe it lays hold
Chriſt, *who was made a curſe for us*, Gal. iii.
and ſo gives complete ſatisfaction to the Lord
ſtice in that point: It holds up the ſacrifice
propitiation of our Saviour, and juſtice ſays,
ſatisfied; it holds up the ranſom, Job xxxiii.
and therefore Chriſt ſays, *Deliver them from g*
down to the pit, for I have found a ranſom. A
we alſo obſerve, (2.) That faith in Chriſt alſo f
the commandments of the law, becauſe it is
fountain of new obedience unto the law. It ha
reſpect unto all God's righteous judgments, i
rifies the heart into the obedience of them; a
works by love, and ſo it is the end of the law
righteouſneſs. It not only gives the anſwer
good conſcience unto all challenges and curſes f
Chriſt's blood; but daily derives vertue out o
ſus Chriſt, to bring forth fruit unto God; wh
cannot reach by doing, it ſupplys by believing,
laying hold upon Chriſt's obedience, and this i
righteouſneſs of the law fulfilled in us. Let us

(3.) Look upon the promiſe of life, and
accompliſhed alſo by faith in Chriſt; for the

ld not have given life, and ſo the promiſe would be in vain: but Chriſt by faith juſtifies the er, and he lives, yea hath eternal life in him, ſo all the three are ſtrengthned and eſtabliſh- Faith is the moſt comprehenſive command- nt, 1 John iii. 22, 23. It is put for all the com- ndments, (1.) By acknowledgment of the breach ll, and ſo it magnifies the law, and makes it ourable, and ſubſcribes to the ſentence of juſtice the authority of the command. (2.) By ſatis- ion, becauſe it gives a price for the breach of it, outs the Cautioner in the craver's hand. (3.) obedience, becauſe after this it hath a reſpect all God's laws, and endeavours after new obe- nce to every one of them.

The improvement of all this is extremely plain; may, (1.) Serve to diſcover unto us how we diſ- point God of his end in giving unto us the com- nd, and the law was given for the beſt purpoſes. t (1.) The moſt part of men have no end, no of the law; God hath given it for ſome end, they know it not: they live without God, and hout rule in the world. Men walk as if there s no law, nor command, no curſe. There are two ends the command was ordained for; the ſt inſtituted end which it naturally tends unto life, Rom. vii. 10 and the ſecond end for which od hath appointed it (ſince the firſt is miſſed) is purſue men to Jeſus Chriſt, and convince them ſin, to make them once die that they may live, m. vii 9. But the moſt part know neither of eſe ends. A carnal profane generation will not k life by the righteouſneſs of the law; *their iniquities teſtify againſt them even to their face, and their ſin is found hateful.* There is not ſo much as endeavour among too many Chriſtian profeſſors, ther to approve themſelves unto men, or their

own conſciences in their outward walking, th
walk without any regard of a command, or ru
as it were by gueſs; their own rule is what plea
them beſt, what ſuits their humours, and croſ
God's word, that they will do: as if they knew n
the curſe, or were afraid of the ſentence of co
demnation. They walk in peace, and have
changes, they walk in the imagination of their va
hearts. They cannot ſay, and none will ſay for the
they ſeek life by the law: their contempt of it
ſo palpable, and yet no other end of it they kno
ſo it is to them as if God had never appoint
it. Again,

(2.) There are many wrong and falſe ends,
uſes of the law, when we make it the immedia
mean to life, and righteouſneſs, and ſeek juſti
cation by it; and this was the end that theſe fa
teachers would have made of it; this is the end th
the *Iſraelites* looked to; *all that the Lord hath co
manded, will we do*, O that was a great undertakin
poor men, they knew not what they ſaid, th
thought upon no other thing but obedience to t
command, and ſo made it a covenant of work
Thus did the people that followed Chriſt, Joh
vi. 28 and the young man that came to Chriſt, ſa
What good thing ſhall I do, to inherit eternal life
Here doing preferred to living by faith, Rom.
:---23. the *Jews* did ſo, and miſſed the right wa
And few of you will take with this, that ye ſeek
be juſtified by your own works; and yet it is n
tural to men, they will not ſubmit to God's right
ouſneſs: there is need of ſubmiſſion to take Chri
O would not any think all the world would be gl
of him, and come out and meet him bringing ſa
vation? Would not dyvours and priſoners be co
tent of a deliverance? Were it any point of ſe
denial for a loſt man, to grip a cord caſt unto hi

et here muſt there be ſubmiſſion to quit your own ighteouſneſs. It were of great moment to convince ou of this, that ye are all naturally ſtanding to the rms of a covenant of works; ye who are yet a- ve, and the commandment hath not ſlain you, ith *Paul*, Rom. vii. 9, 10. Ye are yet ſeeking life y the law, if ye have not applied the curſe unto ourſelves; after application of yourſelves to the ommand, ye are yet ſeeking life by it. Ye adorn ourſelves with ſome external privileges, in ſome xternal duties of religion; ſome branches of the econd table duties, and come to God with theſe. ome think to ſatisfy God for their faults, with an mendment in time to come. Some think God annot puniſh ſome faults in them, becauſe they ave ſome good things in them. Aſk many men he ground of their confidence, and in all the world hey know not how to be ſaved, unleſs their pray- ers do it, or their keeping the kirk. But this is not the nd that God hath ſent out the law for, ye cannot ow ſtand to ſuch a bargain; the law is now weak hrough the fleſh, and it is now impoſſible for it to ive life: though you would pray never ſo much, ll is but abomination. And would not many of you think ye were in a fair venture for heaven, if no man living could lay any thing to your charge, but were unblameable in all the duties of the firſt and ſecond table? That you know nothing as by yourſelf, that you were frequent and fervent in prayer, reading, and meditation; and as far advan- ced as *Paul*, or *David*, or *Moſes*, or *Job*, ſure ye would think yourſelves out of doubt of heaven: nay, but in this ye may ſee ye are ſeeking righte- ouſneſs by the law. Though ye were ſo far advan- ced, yet God, *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*, would look to your ſins, and paſs by your ighteouſneſs, and all that would be as menſtruous

rags

rags before him; and therefore *Paul* was muc
wiſer, who ſaid, *though I know nothing by myſel
yet am I not hereby juſtified.* (3.) Many make th
law an end, when God hath only made it a mean
God hath appointed the law for ſome other uſe
namely, to be ſubſervient to Chriſt, and the goſpe
But oftentimes we make the law the end of all God'
ſpeaking to us, and ſo conclude deſperate reſolu
tions from it, Rom. vii. 10. *When the law cam
ſin revived, and I died.* Here the man is ſlain b
the commandment, and not yet come to the hea
ing Phyſician at *Gilead*. We uſe to gather deſpe
ration of the command, when it preſſes ſo perfec
and exact obedience, ſuch as we cannot yield; whe
it craves the whole ſum, without the abatement o
a farthing: we ſit down under the ſenſe of an im
poſſibility to obey, and will not ſo much as min
at obedience; becauſe we cannot do as we ought
we will not do as we can: becauſe we cannot d
in ourſelves, we conclude nothing can be done a
all. This is to make the command the laſt word
and the end of God's ſpeaking. Doth not the chil
of God frequently ſit down and droop over hi
duty, while he looks upon the *Egyptian* taſkmaſter
the command, charging the whole work and por
tion of brick, and giving no ſtraw to work upon
ſo are many in duties, while the aim and eye is up
on ſome meaſure according to the perfect rule, the
hands fall down feeble, and none is wrought at all
and does not look if there be another word from
God poſterior to the command, a word of promiſe
We uſe alſo to gather deſperate concluſions of the
curſe, and makes the law according to which we
examine ourſelves, the end of God's manifeſting his
mind unto us, and doth not look upon it as a way
leading to ſome other thing. When ye have tried
yourſelves, and applied your own ways and ſtate
unto

unto the perfect rule, God's verdict of all mens condition is true in you, *all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*; *there is none righteous, no not one*; and ſo is neceſſitated to apply the dreadful ſentence of the judgment to yourſelves: ye ſtay there, and ſit down to lodge with the ſentence of condemnation, as if that were God's laſt word to ſinners. Is not this to make the law the end, which is but appointed for another end? The curſe is not irrepealable, why then do ye paſs peremptory concluſions, as if there was no more hope, but it were periſhed from the Lord.

Uſe 2. To diſcover unto us the right end and uſe of the law, the great deſign and purpoſe of God in making ſuch a glorious promulgation of the law on mount *Sinai*, and delivering it by the miniſtry of angels, in the hands of a mediator; the end which God hath been driving at theſe ſix thouſand years, is this only, that men may come to Jeſus Chriſt and believe in him; the end wherefore the covenant of works hath been preached ſince *Adam's* fall, is only this, to make way for a better covenant of grace, that men may hearken to the offer of it. Now faith in Jeſus Chriſt hath two ſpecial actings, either upon Chriſt for juſtification of the perſon, and eternal life and ſalvation; or for ſanctification of the perſon, and actions, in the fruits of new obedience. And in the text unfeigned faith is deſcribed from both theſe, and gives the anſwer of a good conſcience, that is of abſolution from the curſe, by the blood of Jeſus, and makes him as quiet as he had never ſinned: and then it purifies the heart, and worketh by love.

Now the law is a a mean appointed of God, and inſtituted to lead to both theſe, and Chriſt in theſe. (4.) The law is appointed to lead a man to faith in Chriſt, for ſalvation and righteouſneſs; and the ſuit-

ſuitableneſs of it to that end we comprehend thus (1.) It convinces of ſin; *the law entered that the offence might abound, and was added becauſe of tranſgreſſions*, Rom. v. 20. Gal. iii. 24. This is the end of God's ſending the trumpet, and declaring our duty, *that every mouth may be ſtopped before God*, and that none may plead innocence before his tribunal. While men are without the law, they are alive, and think well of themſelves; but the entering of the commandment in a man's conſcience, in the length, breadth, and ſpirituality of it, makes ſin to appear exceeding ſinful: ſin was in the houſe before, but was not ſeen before, and now when the bright beam of a clear, ſpiritual, holy law, carrying God's authority upon it, is darted into the dark ſoul, O what ugly ſights appear! the houſe is full of motes, ye cannot turn the command where it will not diſcover innumerable iniquities, an univerſal leproſy, for all the actions that were called honeſt, civil, and religious before, get a new name, and they being ſeen in God's light, are called rottenneſs, *and living without the law*, Rom. vii. 9, &c. Think ye, but the woman of *Samaria* knew her adultery, before Chriſt ſpake to her; nay, but Chriſt ſpeaks according to the law, and makes it a mean of faith, *He tells her all that ever ſhe did*: He tells her indeed what ſhe knew before, but in another manner. Men know the actions, but the Lord diſcovers the ſinfulneſs of them, as offenſive to Gods holy majeſty, and pure eyes; it will force a man to give his ſin the right name, it will take away all excuſes and ſhifts, and aggravate ſin, that it may become exceeding ſinful. But further, (2.) This is not the laſt end of it, not only is it ordained to ſtop all mouths, but to make all fleſh guilty before God, *For by the deeds of the law, ſhall no fleſh be juſtified*, Rom. iii. 18, 19. It convinces of an impoſſibility to ſtand before God,

and

ed ſo it kills a man; and now the man aſks *what ſhall I do to be ſaved?* He cannot ſtand before God in terms of juſtice, where none can ſtand, and ſo ither muſt ſome other delivery come, or he is gone. Now here he is put from making ſatisfaction, *who can abide with everlaſting burnings?* He ſees himſelf ſtanding under the ſtroke of juſtice; and where can he go from God's preſence? If he go to heaven he is there, if to hell he will find him out, the light and darkneſs are alike to him, Pſal. cxxxix. 7—11. Not only the cries of ſinful man, but, *O wretched and miſerable man* are heard from him! Now theſe are the ſteps the law proceeds by, but it muſt not ſtay there, or elſe it is not come to the end of it; it muſt put a man within the doors of the covenant of grace. The law is a meſſenger ſent to purſue a man out of his own houſe of ſelf-confidence, and ſecurity he was like to periſh in, and not to know it; now by diſcovering his ſinful and curſed condition, it brings him out of himſelf, and out of all created things, but the end is not yet attained, till it put him in Chriſt's hand, and enter him in the border of the city of refuge: and this is the end of the abounding of ſin by the law, that grace may ſuper-abound, Rom. v. 20. And this is the end of the concluding him under ſin, and making him guilty before God, that the promiſe of faith may be given him, and another righteouſneſs revealed by faith, Rom. iii. 20, 21. Gal. iii. 23. And now he is at peace being juſtified by faith, and reſts as a ſtone in its own place, Rom. v. 1, 2. and the law hath nothing to do with him, he is out of its juriſdiction. (2.) Now when it hath purſued him unto Chriſt for ſalvation, yet the command is ſtill uſeful, and appointed yet for faith in Jeſus in performing new obedience. The Chriſtian's daily walking is but the turning of the old round, as the

ſun

ſun doth this day go about the compaſs it did t
firſt day; ſo his life is but a new converſion ſti
when he is now ſettled on Jeſus for ſalvation,
muſt yet be put by the command, it diſcovers h
daily ſins, and ſo he is put to Jeſus the open Fou
tain for all ſin and uncleanneſs; and the comma
comes out in perfection, and diſcovers his ſho
coming and inability, and therefore he is put
Jeſus for ſtrengrh. And this is the end of the pe
fect rule upon believers, that they comparing du
with their ability, may be forced to make up the
inability for duty by faith in Chriſt.

Uſe 3. We may know from this, what great e
couragement we have to believe, and how gre
warrant, ſince not only God commands faith itſe
1 John iii. 23. but he hath appointed faith to
the end of all other commands, and hath give
the whole law for this end, *For without faith it
impoſſible to pleaſe God*; faith is that which G
loves beſt in all obedience. What is it that mak
faith ſo precious, certainly not the act itſelf, as t
precious object of it, Jeſus Chriſt, in whom the F
ther is well pleaſed? Faith glorifies God in his j
ſtice, and mercy moſt, and abaſes the creatur
Now what an obligation lies on us to believe?
is uſual to queſtion a right and warrant of fait
when we have no doubt of other commands; b
in all reaſon, a command might be queſtioned b
fore faith, there is no duty admits of leſs diſputin
Hath not God put it out of all controverſy? Wh
warrant have ye to pray, or to ſanctify the ſabba
Is it not becauſe God commands theſe duties? a
do ye not go about them in obedience to God, n
withſtanding of the ſenſe of your own inabilit
How comes it then that ye make any more ſcru
of this? Hath not the ſame authority that gave t
ten commands, given alſo this new comman

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ſhall not diſobedience be rebellion, and worſe witchcraft? But when beſides all this, it is the pointed end of all the commands, ſo that ye may it is commanded in all the commands, and the ole law; command and curſe is a virtual kind commanding faith, then what ſhall diſobedience ? When ye break one command, ye are guilty all; much more here, not only becauſe of God's thority ſtamped upon all, but becauſe it is the mmon end of all. If ye could once come to be- ve that ye had as good warrant to believe in riſt, as to abſtain from curſing God's name, and great obligation, what could ye anſwer for diſ- edience?

Uſe 4. This is a point of great conſolation alſo; hat more terrible than the law, nothing in all the orld? Nothing in all the word ſo dreadful as the mpet on *Sinai*, ſounding louder and louder: the dge and law gives voice, yet if ye could look to e end of it, and if the vail that was on the *Jews* art be not upon yours, O how comfortable ſhall be! Doth not a command and curſe form a dead nd in an awakened man's ears, and ſtrike unto his art like a knife? But if he knew this it would be ealing medicine. Would not many ſinners wiſh ere would be no ſuch thing in the Bible as a con- mning law, when they came to get it eſcaped? t look to the end of it, and ſee goſpel ſaving ſtrine in the very promulgation of it; when it s publiſhed, it made the *Jews* all to tremble and out, and even holy *Moſes* himſelf was afraid: t there is more conſolation than terror here, this ndemning law is delivered in a Mediator's hand, en Jeſus Chriſt, Gal. iii. 19, 20. Who was he at ſpake out of the cloud, and fire, and came and down his throne on *Sinai*, accompanied with numerable angels? Deut. xxxii. 2. Acts vii. 53.

It

It was Jeſus Chriſt that *ſpoke to Moſes in the mou and in the buſh* alſo, Acts vii. 35, 38. Is it then Mediator's law, whoſe office it is to preach g tidings, and the day of ſalvation? Sure then it ne be dreadful to no man; for if he wound, he ſh heal, and he comes to bind up the broken-hearted. may look on the command and curſe as meſſeng ſent by mercy, to prepare you, and make his w ſtraight before his face. The end of the law is n to condemn you, to ſtop your mouth, and ma you guilty, it is not the laſt work it is appoint for; but the Mediator hath another end, to bri you to the righteouſneſs of faith, to ſave you wit out yourſelves. Therefore ye may more willing accept the challenge, ſince it comes in ſo peaceab terms. What ſhould be terrible to you in all God word and diſpenſation, ſince the miniſtry of co demnation and death is become the port of heav and life? What muſt all his other dealings b ſurely there is nothing in the world, but it mu lead to this end alſo? Proſperity and adverſity, t end of them is faith, conviction and challenges. not then as men without hope, when you are cha lenged, for the challenge comes from a Mediato who would have you ſaved.

Uſe 5. You may ſee hence how injurious they a to grace who cry down the law. The *Antinomi* cannot be a right defender and pleader for fait (the end of the command) when he oppoſes t command that leads to that end; he cannot ex Chriſt aright, or lead men to him, when he w not come under the pedagogue's hand to be led Chriſt. The law even as a covenant of works is perpetual uſe to a believer, becauſe it lays a bleſſ neceſſity upon him to abide with Chriſt. It is a gua put before the door, to keep him, as it was a ſchoo maſter to bring him to Chriſt; and makes a m ſu

dinate to the goſpel as a mean to the end, and ought to be uſed: ſo then it is againſt the truth, the *Iſraelites* were under the law, and not Chri-: the law came not to be a mean of life and teouſneſs unto them, but *that the offence might nd, that ſo grace might* ſuper-abound. The was not intended, but Chriſt was intended; this end they could not fix their eyes upon, by on of the hardneſs of their hearts. (2.) It is falſe, that Chriſtian believers are wholly ex-ed from the command, and law; no, he hath of all that leads to Jeſus Chriſt; and the law becomes goſpel under that notion. The com-d ſtands in its integrity, that he may be con-ed of ſhort-coming and inability, and ſo may eve in Chriſt; the curſe alſo ſtands, and con-ns him for new ſins, that he may believe in iſt, who juſtifies the ungodly. Again, it is not th, that the law is no mean of converſion, tho' in its own vertue and power; but as it is de-red in a Mediator's hand, and applied by the it of grace and the goſpel.

Uſe 6. We exhort you not to diſappoint God of end, and if he hath given the law for this end, er reſt till ye be at the end; let the law enter o you once, or enter ye into it: ye cannot come Jeſus unleſs it lead you, let it enter into your ſciences, with God's power and authority as law, and examine yourſelves by it, elſe ye ſhall er believe in Chriſt. (2.) Accept all the chal-ges of the law, let it enter till your mouth be pped; read your obligation well, that ye may how much ye owe. (3.) Let faith be the iſſue result of all the applications of the law to your-es; ye go in the law's hand to Chriſt, and ſit down with it, or elſe you will not go free till have paid the laſt farthing; make faith in Chriſt

the end of the curſe condemning you, that he
abſolve you, the end of the command comm
ing, that he may give ſtrength and fulfil in you
righteouſneſs of the law; God never ſent a co
tion to you, but that you may believe, and be
bliſhed. (4.) Let it be your exerciſe to travel
tween an impoſſible command, and Chriſt Jeſu
faith, through whom all things are poſſible. W
always down how much ye owe, that ye may
grace ſuper-abounding; ſit not down to exam
the duty, or go not about it in your own ſtreng
Be not diſcouraged though ye find no ſtrength,
are called in ſuch a caſe to believe; nay in a wo
what is all the Chriſtian's employment, faith
hauſts it all? Look on the command, and it c
for believing; look upon the curſe, and it calls
for believing.

SERMON XII.

1 Tim. i. 5. *Now the end of the commandment*, &

WE come now, as was propoſed, to obſer
(2.) That faith unfeigned is the only thi
which gives the anſwer of a good conſcience
wards God. Conſcience in general, is nothing e
but a practical knowledge of the rule a m
ſhould walk by, and of himſelf in reference to th
rule. It is the laying down a man's ſtate, and co
dition, and actions beſide the rule of God's wor
or the principles of nature's light. It is the chi
piece of a man, the man is as his conſcience is:
is a man's lord, as a wing to a bird, or as a rudd
is to a ſhip, ſo is conſcience to a man in all his way
The office of conſcience is ordinarily comprehend
in three ſtiles it gets; It is a law or rule, a witne
a

a judge, or a light, a regiſter, and a recorder, and executioner; for the conſcience its firſt act is the principle of nature's light, obliging it as a rule walk by, or ſome revealed truth of God, where the conſcience is informed. Now the conſcience the ſecond place comes to examine itſelf accord- to the rule, and there it bears witneſs of a man's ions, or ſtate, and faithfully records and depones, at length the conſcience pronounces the ſen- ce upon the man, according as it has found him; ther accuſing or excuſing, condemning or abſolv- Now a good conſcience is diverſly taken in ipture, (1.) A good conſcience is an honeſt clean ſcience, bearing teſtimony of integrity and up- htneſs in walking, ſuch as *Paul* had, 2 Cor. i, *Our rejoicing is this, the teſtimony of our con- nce, that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, we e had our converſation in the world.* Heb. xiii, *We truſt we have a good conſcience in all things, lling to live honeſtly.* Acts xxiv. 16. *Herein do I rciſe myſelf in having a conſcience void of offence, ards God, and man.* 1 Pet. iii. 16. *Having a d conſcience that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly ac- your good converſation in Chriſt.* (2.) A good ſcience is a conſcience calmed and quieted, that h gotten an anſwer to all challenges in the blood, reſurrection of Jeſus, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And this take to be meaned here; the good conſcience is conſcience that is ſprinkled with Chriſt's blood, *dead works, to ſerve the living God,* Heb. ix, For the guilty man that comes to Chriſt, and ſhes in the fountain opened for ſin, *hath no more ſcience of ſins,* Heb. x. 2. And therefore it is ed a pure and clean conſcience, 2 Tim i. 3. *I d God, whom I ſerve from my forefathers, with re conſcience,* &c. the ſtain of guilt is taken

away. Now I ſay, faith only gives the anſwer
good conſcience, the man that comes to Chriſt
an ill conſcience, when he hath examined him
according to the law, and given out faithful wi
of his own ſtate, and condition, and accordi
pronounced ſentence, the ſentence condemne
condemnatory; he finds himſelf lying under G
curſe, and ſo the conſcience from a judge tur
tormentor, and begins to anticipate hell, and
vent the execution of wrath: all the world ca
anſwer this challenge, or abſolve from this ſente
until faith come and give a ſolid anſwer, that
be a ground of peace; and its anſwer is good
ſure, becauſe it dips the conſcience in the bloo
the Son of God. For the blood of bulls an
goats could not do it, the redemption of the
was precious. Faith puts the ſoul over head
ears in the fountain opened, and it comes out
ſnow, or wool, tho' it were like ſcarlet or crimſ
The law condemned, and the conſcience ſubſcri
ed itſelf ſinful, and concluded itſelf loſt in ſin;
faith in Chriſt pleads before mercy's throne, wh
judgment and juſtice alſo ſits: it pleads its ca
over again, and gets the former ſentence repeal
The conſcience gave in the charge againſt the m
but faith ſits down and writes the diſcharge;
ſo he is as free, as if all his debt was payed, or
ver contracted: faith puts the Cautioner in the c
ditor's hand, and goes free. As the law writes do
a charge of ſin and curſes, faith ſets againſt it
many ſufferings in Chriſt, as many bleſſings in
Bleſſing of all nations. And when the conſcien
that condemned itſelf, by faith again abſolves
ſelf; O what a calm, what a perfect peace is it th
kept in! What a continual feaſt doth it enjo
Prov. xv. 5. Make him never ſuch a great man
the world, he would utterly deſpiſe it, and co
him

ſelf more bleſſed in the pardon of ſin, and the
ndſhip of God, than all the enjoyments of this
ld. He is better in ſome reſpect than if he had
er ſinned, for his ſin is as it were, not before
d; and withal he hath got not only acquittance
guilt, but acquaintance with Jeſus Chriſt, the
ing of the nations, and the deſire of all the
ilies of the earth. Now may he triumph and
ſt in Chriſt Jeſus, *Who ſhall condemn? It is God
juſtifies, it is Chriſt that died, and is riſen again.*
may ſay with David, *I will not fear, though my
mities compaſs me about*; and with Job, *If he
quietneſs, who can give trouble?* We obſerve
that,

(1.) Before a man come to Chriſt, he has an ill
ſcience; for either he is at peace with himſelf,
abſolves himſelf, ſaying, *I ſhall have peace, tho'
alk in the abominations of my heart*, Deut. xxix.
he alſo ſays, *Becauſe I am innocent, therefore
will turn away his wrath*, Jer. ii. 35. He cries
e, peace, when there is no peace, Ezek. xv 10.
that is but a deſperate condition, and a bad
ſcience, if any can be ſo called. This is the ſe-
and ſeared conſcience, that either doth not
itſelf, becauſe a man hath beaten it flint hard,
conſtantly abſolving itſelf upon falſe grounds;
is the conſcience that in all the creation is
reſt the deſperate conſcience, that ſhall never
a good anſwer: his ſin is but lying at the door
Cain's, and ſhall enter in when judgment comes.
but flattering himſelf in his own eyes, till his
uity be found hateful, and till ſudden deſtruc-
comes as an armed man. Look upon Deut.
20. and ſee ſuch a man's caſe; there is no
for him, the Lord will not pity, nor ſpare
but pour upon him all the curſes of the law,
when he bleſſes himſelf in his own eyes. In

ſhort he is ſuch, as is awakened to ſee where h
and condemns himſelf according to the word,
that is a better and a more hopeful conſcience t
the former, yet it is but an ill conſcience; con
ence doth act its part aright, and in ſo far i
good, but the man is but in a miſerable conditi
Withal it gives ſuch a wound to the ſoul, as n
can bear it; all the ſad affections which take
mens ſpirits come in, and this is the worm wh
never dies in hell, and the fire which ſhall ne
be quenched. Anger, grief, hatred, deſpair alw
dwell with an ill conſcience. This is both the
ſemblance of hell, and the ſparks which come fr
that devouring fire. But (2.) When the troub
conſcience toſſed up and down, and looking up
all hands for help, and all refuge failing them,
no perſon caring for their ſoul, when it gets o
a look of Jeſus, and roweth unto his ſhore, O w
a change! he commands the winds to calm,
the waves to ceaſe, and ſays unto him, *Son, b*
good comfort, thy ſins are forgiven. Faith finds
Jeſus ample grounds of anſwering all challenge
ſilencing all temptations, of overcoming all e
mies, and commands the ſoul to go into its p
of refuge. *Return unto thy reſt, O my ſoul, for*
Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee, &c. P
cxvi. 7, 8, 9.

We ſhall now ſhut up all with the application
ſome uſes. *Uſe* 1. We may learn hence, how
have a good conſcience; faith is a rare thing,
a good conſcience is much rarer. And here we m
notice, that the conſcience which is dead and ſle
ing, is not a good conſcience: every quiet and c
conſcience is not a good one; ye may dream o
your days with the fooliſh virgins, and take re
a pleaſing deluſion, and cry peace, peace, and
the end of it will be worſe than the beginning,

science that acts not at all, nor judges itself, is it were no conscience; either ignorance hath nded it, and keeps it in the dark, or wickedness h stopped its mouth. You think your conscience od because it tells you few of your faults, it trou- you not; but that conscience must once speak, do its office it may be in a worse time for you.) It is not a good conscience that always speaks od, and absolves the man: God may condemn, en it absolves; when ye walk according to false inciples and grounds, and either take a wrong e, or know not how to apply the rule to your- ves. Shall God approve of false judgment? your science is erring and deludes you. But (3.) The od conscience is not only a quiet conscience, but quieted conscience: it not only hath peace, but ace after trouble. Ye then that have no peace, what ye had all your days, it is but a mere cy; the answer of a good conscience quiets the stempered mind, it comes by the sprinkling and thing of Christ's blood. He that hath peace on d grounds with God, hath once taken up his mity against him. (2.) The good conscience th been once an evil conscience, when it met h the command; the man has once been under law, before he came to faith, and examined mself, and his conscience condemned him as not hteous, and out of Christ. Ye then that never amined your state, according to the perfect and ly law, and never judged yourselves, ye cannot ieve in Jesus, and so can have no good consci- ce. (3.) The good conscience flows nearest from th answering the challenges of the law. Some ve had sore distempers of conscience, and pud- g exercises of terror; but how they were eased, quieted, they cannot tell, but their spring tide ed, and they bubbled no more: it went away

at will, and did wear out with time. This is n
a good conſcience that knows not diſtinctly t
grounds of faith, to oppoſe to the law's condemn
tion. Some turn to build cities with *Cain*, and p
the time pleaſantly, or in ſome buſineſs, that th
may beguile their challenges; but this is not
conſcience that faith makes good. Now ſet ap
all theſe who do not examine themſelves at all, n
judge themſelves, but live in a golden dream, w
have never been arraigned before God's tribun
or ſummoned by his deputy to appear before h
judgment-ſeat: and join unto theſe all perſons wh
judging themſelves, take other rules of abſoluſio
than the word gives, who after trial abſolve them
ſelves, and with all theſe who condemning them
ſelves, yet flee not unto this city of refuge, th
blood of ſprinkling, to get a ſolid anſwer in t
word to all their challenges, and O how few a
behind? It is but as the gleaning after the vintag
Nay, many believers have not a good conſcienc
though they have a right to it, becauſe they ſett
not themſelves on the grounds of faith, and go n
on from faith to faith: there muſt be ſome ſen
of faith, before faith anſwer rightly, and give pea
to the mind.

Uſe 2. Ye ſee the way to get a good conſcienc
believe much, and maintain your faith. It is
ſimple and poor a miſtake as can befal a ſoul;
think becauſe ye have not peace after your belie
ing, therefore it was not unfeigned and true faith
and therefore ye will not believe, becauſe ye cann
get peace. But believe that ye may have a goo
conſcience: Would ye know your ſins are pardo
ed before ye believe? How precious ſhould fai
be unto you, when by faith ye may not only ove
come the world, but as it were, overcome God
judging, and the ſoul may be juſtified when it
judged

lodged? Ye will not get challenges anſwered by your own integrity and uprightneſs, or by your performing of duties: No, no, theſe cannot be ſufficient grounds of your peace; lay down the ſolid and ſatisfying grounds of faith, of imputed righteouſneſs, and of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt, and this ſhall be a foundation of laſting peace. Senſe makes not a good conſcience, there is much lightneſs and vanity in it, and the rule it proceeds by is changeable, but faith eſtabliſhes the ſoul, and makes it not aſhamed.

SERMON XIII.

1 Tim. i. 5. *Now the end of the commandment*, &c.

THIRDLY, Faith purging the conſcience purifies the heart, Acts xv. 9. and hope alſo purifies the heart, 1 John iii. 3. which is nothing elſe but faith in the perfection and vigour of it. This includes (1.) That the heart was unclean before faith. (2.) That faith cleanſes it, and makes it pure. *But who can ſay, I have made my heart pure*, Prov. xx. 9. *I am clean from my ſin?* Is there any man's heart on this ſide of time, which lodges not many ſtrange gueſts? In anſwer to this we may obſerve, That there is a legal purity, and a goſpel purity: a legal purity is a ſincere and full conformity to God's holy will and command, in thought, affections, inclinations and actions; and in this ſenſe, who can ſay, I have made my hands clean? The old corruption ſticks to the heart, and cannot be thoroughly ſcraped out; there are many lurking holes for uncleanneſs to lie hid in. Corruption is engrained in him, and it will not be the work of one day to change it: the whole head is ſick, and the

the whole body full of ſores; all the corners of the heart are full of filthineſs and idols; and though the houſe be now ſweeped, and garniſhed, and all things look better in it, yet there are many hidden places of rottenneſs undiſcovered, and it is the ſoul's continual exerciſe, to purify itſelf as he is pure. But evangelical purity and cleanneſs, is that which God reconciled in Chriſt takes to be ſo, and that which in Chriſt is accepted, and is a fount of his clean Spirit dwelling in the heart. The heart formerly was a troubled fountain, that ſent out filthy ſtreams, as a puddle, corruption was the mud among the affections and thoughts; but now a pure heart is like a clear running water, clean and bright like cryſtal. Now this purity conſiſts in the waſhing of regeneration, and ſanctification by the Spirit of holineſs. Jeſus Chriſt came both by water and blood, 1 John v. 6. he came by blood, to ſprinkle and purge the conſcience, that it might have no more conſcience of ſins, Heb. x. 2. chap. ix. 14. and he alſo came by water, that is the waſhing and cleanſing vertue of the Spirit of grace, to purge and cleanſe us from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit. There are two things in ſin, that Jeſus came to deſtroy, the guilt and offence of ſin, whereby the ſinner is bound over to condemnation, and lies under the Judge's curſe; and the ſpot of ſin, which alſo Chriſt came to deſtroy: he did both in his own perſon, and he is to perfect this in us perſonally, who were judicially reckoned one with him, Rom. vi. 3---12. 1 John iii. 5. Now Jeſus Chriſt hath come with blood to ſprinkle the conſcience from dead works, and give it a good anſwer to the challenges of the law, and an ill conſcience; and he hath come likewiſe with water, to waſh and cleanſe us from the ſpots and filth and power of ſin. The firſt removes the guilt, the latter removes the filth of ſin,

and

and both are done by faith, which is our victory over the world; and this is the way how faith overcomes the world by the water and blood, 1 John v. 4, 5, 6. The blood of Jeſus Chriſt is holden by faith with a twofold vertue of cleanſing, from the guilt, and from the filth of ſin, and thus cleanſes us from all unrighteouſneſs, 1 John i. 7. According to the promiſe of the covenant, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. The application of the blood of ſprinkling hath two effects, one is for juſtification, *ye ſhall be clean*, another is, *from all your filthineſs and idols will I cleanſe you*, that is ſanctification. (1.) Now this purity conſiſts in this, that the pure heart regards not iniquity in the inward man, nor delights in ſin, Pſal. lxvi. 18. He ſets not up his idols in God's place, Ezek. xxxvi. 25. The cleanſing of the heart is from idols, although he cannot get himſelf puriſied as Chriſt is pure, and though iniquity be in his heart, yet he regards it not; he looks not upon it as a gueſt approven and accepted: ſin may be an intruding gueſt, but ſin is not welcomed with all his heart. He dare not take that pleaſure in ſin, that another man would do: He hath a worm that eats up his pleaſure, when he departs from God, or his thoughts go a whoring from him; the unbelieving man's heart is a houſe full of idols, but the entry of faith by God's Spirit makes their Dagon to fall. But (2.) The pure heart hath much of the filthineſs taken away that filled it before, and ſo it is denominated from the beſt part. It is waſhed and cleanſed from a ſea of corruption, and the body of ſin that did reign within the heart, was formerly like an impure fountain, that ſent out nothing but rotten ſtinking waters. *Unto him were all things unclean, for his heart and conſcience was defiled*, Tit. i. 15. Nothing was pure to him, it run continually in a ſtream of unclean thoughts and affections;

affections; but now he is purified, and to the believer *all things are pure*: the ordinary ſtrain and current of his thoughts and affections run more clearly free of the earthly quality they had, more ſublimated, more ſpiritualized, and he is named by that: though it may be temptation may trouble the fountain, and make it run unclean and earthly, yet it will ſettle again, and come into its own poſture, and the dreg fall to the bottom, and the clean water of the Spirit be the predominant; but a ſtanding puddle will run foul, as long as it runs, corruption goes through all, it is not a corner of the heart, but the whole heart.

(3.) A pure heart is like a running fountain, if it be defiled yet it is always caſting out the filth, and is about returning to a right ſtate; but an impure heart is like a ſtanding puddle that keeps all it gets. If by temptation the pure heart and affections be ſtirred, and the filth that is in the bottom come up to the brim, it hath no reſt, nor peace in that condition, but works it out again: and it hath this advantage, that it is purer and clearer after troubling nor it was before, for much of the filth would run out that had been lying quiet before: but an impure heart keeps all, and vents none, if ye trouble it, ye will raiſe an ill ſmell, and when it ſettles, it falls but to the bottom again, and there is as much to work upon the next time. In a word, the believer when he ſins, and his heart goes wrong, he weeps over his heart, and has no peace till it be cleanſed; he waſhes in the fountain of Chriſt's blood, when a natural tranſgreſſion gets up, he ſets himſelf againſt it, and the root of it both, and bears down the original corruption, which is the fountain of all ſin, Pſal. li. 5. and at every deſcent he brings away ſomething of that puddle; he is upon the growing hand by the exerciſe of faith,

and

and repentance: look upon him after he has ſeen, and been ſenſible of his ſins, and ye would ſay it is not the man ye ſaw, he hates ſin more than he did formerly. We alſo notice,

(4.) That purity is ſincerity and uprightneſs, James iv. 8. *purify your hearts ye double-minded.* Hypocriſy is filthineſs and abominable to God. He then is a ſincere man, that hath any honeſty of heart toward God: when his actions are not right, his heart doth not approve them, Rom. vii. When he cannot come up to his duty, his deſire comes before performance. A ſincere man hath a reſpect to all God's commandments.

(5.) The pure man is ſtill purifying himſelf *even as God is pure, as he who hath called him is holy, ſo he is holy in all manner of converſation*; he never thinks he is clean enough, and ſo he aſpires after greater purity, and is named a ſaint, rather from his aim and endeavour, than from his attainment. He cries, unclean, unclean, am I, and holy, holy, Lord God art thou. He hath taken up his lodging near the opened fountain, and dwells there, never to remove thence, till he have his robes clean and white in the blood of the Lamb. No unclean thing can enter into heaven, and he is trimming himſelf againſt that day, and ſetting apart all ſuperfluity of naughtineſs, and filthineſs, and ſtill all his righteouſneſs is as menſtruous rags; he is cleanſing his houſe, every day caſting out ſomething, ſearching out all the corners of it, laſt the unclean thing, and the *Babyloniſh* garment be hid: his pattern is to walk even as Chriſt walked, 1 John ii. 6.

Now faith and a good conſcience have influence on this purifying the heart; (1.) Becauſe faith lays hold upon the cleanſing vertue of Chriſt's blood; it applies Jeſus Chriſt who came by water and blood, and his blood purges the conſcience from dead works,

works, to ſerve the living God; the blood that was offered up by the eternal Spirit, of how great vertue muſt it be when applied to the heart and conſcience? Heb. ix. 14. No wonder it make that like wool, which was formerly like ſcarlet. Now faith in Jeſus Chriſt applies that blood; it is the very hand that ſprinkles it; faith takes up houſe beſide the opened fountain, and dwells there. Faith takes Jeſus for ſanctification, as well as juſtification 1 Cor. i. 30. Faith looks upon a judicial union with Chriſt crucified, and ſees his perfect offering once offered to ſanctify all, and therefore makes continual applications with David, *purge me with hyſſop and I ſhall be clean, waſh me and I ſhall be whiter than the ſnow.* (2.) Faith purifies the heart, becauſe it lays hold on the promiſes, and makes uſe of the word, 2 Cor. vii. 1. Faith having ſuch promiſes cleanſes the man from all filthineſs of the fleſh, and ſpirit. The proper object of faith is the word, and the word is the truth by which we are ſanctified and made clean, John xvii. 17. There are many precious promiſes of ſanctification and holineſs, and faith draws the vertue of purifying the heart out of the promiſes, and applies the promiſe to his impure heart, and it is purged. (3) Faith purifies the heart alſo by provocation and up-ſtirring, in as far as it gives the anſwer of a good conſcience; for the man who hath gotten a ſolid anſwer to all his objections in Chriſt's blood, and hath the continual feaſt of joy and peace in believing, O how will he abhor himſelf, and repent in duſt and in aſhes? Faith takes up God's holineſs and purity, and loaths itſelf with *Job*, and cries, unclean. The believer will thus reaſon and conclude, Shall I any more delight and live in ſin, ſince I am dead unto it by Jeſus Chriſt? Rom. vi. 1, 2. He falls in with the beauties of holineſs, and ſo cannot abide his own.

Faith

faith begets hope, and hope purifies the heart. Shall then the man who expects to ſee God, and be a citizen of the new *Jeruſalem*, where no unclean thing can enter, ſhall he walk in his former luſts, like the wicked world, and not make himſelf ready for the continuing city he goes to, and adorn himſelf for the company of the bleſſed God and angels.

Let us now conclude, by applying all which hath been ſaid in ſome uſes. *Uſe* 1. We may ſee from what hath been hinted, how little faith is among you; faith purifies the heart, but if ye examine yourſelves, your hearts will be found unclean, and ſuch as the holy Ghoſt cannot dwell in. The temple in which God's holy Spirit reſides muſt touch no unclean thing, 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17. Are not many mens corruptions rank and lively? Unclean hands are an infallible demonſtration of an unclean heart, James iv. 8. Theſe things which proceed out of the heart, may teach you what is within the heart; the ſtreams may let you know what is in the fountain, Mark vii. 15, to 22 ver. James iii. 11, 12. What need ye any more proof of yourſelves? Sinners look to your hands, and your outward man, and learn from them to know your hearts: Theſe things proceed out of the heart and defile the whole man. The profanity of the moſt part of mens practices, curſing and ſwearing, &c. is a bitter ſtream that cannot proceed from a good fountain. It is a wonder how the world ſatisfy themſelves with a dream of faith; What influence hath your faith had upon your heart and converſation? Are ye not as earthly and worldly as ever, as unclean as ever? Ye think your hearts good, but if your converſation be not good, your hearts are not good. Will any perſon think his ſins are pardoned, when he wallows in them? Do they believe they ſhall obtain the remiſſion of theſe ſins

they

they are not purging themſelves from? No, n
the blood and water muſt go together, and t
Spirit's ſanctifying, with Chriſt's juſtifying.

Uſe 2. The children of God may hence gathe
the ground and reaſon of their little progreſs in ſan
tification. Why are your hearts ſo unclean, a
why is there ſo much corruption yet living in yo
thoughts and affections, that it cannot keep with
the heart, but as a full fountain muſt run out
ſtreams of external actions? It is even this, ye
not believe much, and though this be told you, y
ye will not believe it, ye take ways of your own
purge out your corruptions, and it will not do;
your reſolutions, prayers, ſad experiences, &c. a
of no more virtue than the blood of bulls and goat
Ye muſt then apply the blood of the Son of Go
which was offered up by the eternal Spirit. It
but a poor fancy to ſuſpend believing, till ye ſee
pure heart; how ſhall ye get a pure heart? Is
not folly to forbear planting till ye ſee fruits, or
pluck up your tree becauſe it bears not the fir
day? Abide in Chriſt, and ye ſhall bring for
much fruit, believe, and believe, and believe again
till faith be anſwered by a good conſcience, t
that ſweet echo be given unto the Lord's com
forting voice, *thy ſins which are many, are fo
given thee.* Be much in laying hold upon the pr
cious promiſes, and then your heart ſhall fall o
of love with this preſent evil world, and ſhall
liſh ſpiritual things; but who will believe this
port? Ye go away convinced that this is the on
way to purify yourſelves, and yet ye contin
puddling in your old way: May God perſuade yo
hearts to do better.

An ESSA

AN ESSAY UPON CHRISTIAN LOVE,

wherein the Nature, Properties, Excellency, and Fruits of this Chriſtian Grace, are diſtinctly explained, and the conſtant Exerciſe of it enforced from the moſt powerful Motives; with a paraphraſe upon the thirteenth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, *divided into five Chapters.*

CHAP. I.

THE beauty and excellency of this world conſiſts, not only in the perfection and comelineſs of each part in it, but eſpecially in the wiſe and wonderful proportion and union of theſe ſo ſeveral parts. It is not the lineaments and colours that make the image, or compleats the beauty; but the proportion and harmony of theſe, though different ſeverally. And truly that is the wonder, that ſuch repugnant natures, ſuch different parts, and diſſentient qualities do conſpire together in ſuch an exact perfect unity and agreement; in which the wiſdom of God doth moſt appear, by *ordering all things in number, weight and meaſure.* His power appears in the making all the materials of nothing; but his wiſdom is manifeſted in the ordering and diſpoſing ſo diſſonant natures into one well agreeing and comely frame: So that this orderly diſpoſition of all things into one fabrick, is as it harmonious melody of the creation, made up as it were of diſſonant ſounds and that comely

beauty of the world, reſulting from ſuch a prop tion and wiſe combination of divers lines and lours. To go no further than the body of a m how, what various elements are combined int well ordered being, the extreme qualities being refracted and abated ſo as they may join in frie ſhip and ſociety, and make up one ſweet tem rament?

Now, it is moſt reaſonable to ſuppoſe, That, the law of creation, there was no leſs order a unity to be among men, the chief eſt of the wo of God: And ſo it was indeed, a God had mou ed the reſt of the world into a beautiful frame, the firſt ſtamp of his finger, ſo he did ingrave up the hearts of men ſuch a principle, as might b perpetual bond and tie to unite the ſons of men t gether; this was nothing elſe but the law of lo the principal fundamental law of our creation, lo to God, founded on that eſſential dependence a ſubordination to God; and love to man, ground upon that communion and intereſt in one ima of God. All the commandments of the firſt a ſecond table are but ſo many branches of theſe tre or ſtreams of theſe fountains: Therefore our Sa our gives a complete abridgment of the law of n ture and moral law, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord t God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, a with all thy mind; this is the firſt and great co mandment: The ſecond is like unto it, Thou ſh love thy neighbour as thyſelf*, Matth. xxii. 37, 38, 3 And therefore, as *Paul* ſays, *Love is the fulfilli of the law*, Rom. xiii. 10. The univerſal debt owe to God is love in the ſuperlative degree; a the univerſal debt we owe one another is love an inferior degree; yet of no lower kind than t of ourſelves: *Owe no man any thing, but to b one another*, Rom. xiii. 8. and that collateral w himſe

himſelf, as Chriſt ſpeaks. Unto theſe laws all other are ſubordinate, and one of them is ſubordinate to the other, but to nothing elſe. And ſo, as long as the love of God may go before, the love of man would follow; and whatever doth not untie the knot of divine affection, ought not to looſe the knot of that love which is linked with it; when the uniting of ſouls together divides both from God, then indeed, and only then, muſt this knot be unbound that the other may be kept faſt.

But this beautiful and comely frame of man is marred; ſin hath cut in pieces that divine love that knit man to God: and the diſſolving of this hath looſed that link of human ſociety, love to our neighbour, and now all is rents, rags and diſtractions, becauſe ſelf-love hath uſurped the throne: the unity of the world of mankind is diſſolved; one is diſtracted from another, following their own private inclinations and inordinate affection, which is the poiſon of enmity, and ſeed of all diſcord. If the love of God and of one another had kept the throne, there had been a coordination and co-working of all men in all their actions, for God's glory and the common good of man: But now ſelf-love having enthroned itſelf, every man is for himſelf, and ſtrives, by all means, to make a concurrence of all things to his own intereſt and deſigns. The firſt principles of love would have made all mens actions and courſes flow into the ocean of divine glory and mutual edification; ſo that there could not have been any diſturbance or jarring amongſt them, all flowing into one common end: but ſelf-love hath turned all the channels backward towards itſelf; and this is its wretched aim and endeavour, in which it wearies itſelf, and diſcompoſes the world, to wind and turn in every thing, and to make, in the end, a general affluence of all ſtreams into its own boſom; this is the ſeed

of all diviſion and confuſion which is among me while every man makes himſelf the center, it cann chuſe but all the lines and draughts of mens co ſes muſt thwart and croſs each other.

Now, the Lord Jeſus having redeemed loſt m and repaired his ruins, he makes up this brea eſpecially reſtores this fundamental ordinance our creation, and unites men again to God and one another; therefore he is *our peace*, he hath moved the ſeeds of diſcord between God and m and between man and man: And this is the ſu ject of that divine epiſtle which the beloved Apoſt full of that divine love, did pen. *God is love; a in this was the love of God manifeſted, that God ſe his only begotten Son into the world*; and *he th loveth is born of God, and knoweth God; but we lo God, becauſe he loved us firſt*, and *if God ſo lov us, we ought alſo to love one another*, 1 John i This is the very ſubſtance of the goſpel, a doctri of God's love to man, and of man's love due God, and to them who are begotten of God; t one declared, the other commanded: ſo that mu of the goſpel is but a new edition or publication that old antient fundamental law of creation. Th is that paradox which *John* delivers, *I write new commandment unto you, but an old comman ment, even that which you heard from the beginnin again, a new commandment I write unto you, whi thing is true in him and you; becauſe the darkne is paſt, and the true light now ſhineth*, 1 John 7, 8. It is no new commandment, but that prim tive command of love to God and men, which *the fulfilling of the law*; and yet new it is, becau there is a new obligation ſuperadded. The bond creation was great, but the tie of redemption greater: God gave a being to man, that is enough but God to become a miſerable man for man, th

infinitely more: fellow-creatures, that is ſufficient a bond of amity; but to be once fellow-captives, companions in miſery, and then companions in ercy and bleſſedneſs, that is a new and ſtronger ood. Mutual love was the badge of reaſonable eatures in innocency; but now Jeſus Chriſt hath t a new ſtamp and ſignification on it; and made the very differential character and token of his ciples, *By this ſhall all men know that ye are my ciples, if ye love one another:* And therefore, hen he is making his latter-will, he gives this amentary commandment to his children and irs, *A new commandment give I unto you, that ye e one another; as I have loved you, that ye alſo e one another:* New indeed; for tho' it be the me command, yet there was never ſuch a motive, ducement, and perſuaſive to it as this; God ſo ved that he gave me, and I ſo loved that I gave yſelf, that is an addition more than all that was fore, John xiii. 34, 35.

There is a ſpecial ſtamp of excellency put on this fection of love, that God delights to exhibite himſelf to us in ſuch a notion, *God is love:* And ſo lds out himſelf as the pattern of this, *Be ye followers of God as dear children, and walk in love,* ph. v. 1, 2. This is the great virtue and property hich we ſhould imitate our Father in: As God ath a general love to all the creatures, from whence he river of his goodneſs flows out through the rth, and in that, is like the ſun conveying his light nd benign influence, without partiality or reſtraint, the whole world; but his ſpecial favour runs in more narrow channel towards theſe whom he ath choſen in Chriſt: ſo in this a Chriſtian ſhould e like his Father, and there is nothing in which e reſembles him more than in this, *to walk love towards all men,* even our enemies; for in

this he gives us a pattern, Matth. v. 44, 45. *But I ſay unto you, Love your enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you and perſecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the juſt and on the unjuſt.* To do good to all, and to be ready to forgive all, is the glory of God; and certainly it is the glory of a child of God to be *merciful as his Father is merciful*, and *good to all*, and *kind to the unthankful*; and this is to be *perfect as he is perfect*; this perfection is charity and love to all: but the particular and ſpecial current of affection will run toward the *houſhold of faith*; theſe who are of the ſame deſcent, and family, and love: this draw into ſuch a compaſs, is the badge and livery of his diſciples; theſe two in a Chriſtian are nothing but the reflex of the love of God, and ſtreams iſſuing out from it. A Chriſtian walking in love to all, bleſſing his enemies, praying for them; not reviling or cursing again, but bleſſing for curſing, and praying for reviling; forgiving all, and ready to give to the neceſſities of all; and more eſpecially, uniting the force of his love and delight, to beſtow it upon theſe who are the excellent ones, and delight of God; ſuch a one is his Father's picture, ſo to ſpeak, he is partaker of that divine nature, and royal ſpirit of love. Gal. vi. 10. *As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, eſpecially unto them who are of the houſhold of faith.* 1 Theſſ. iii. 12, 13. *And the Lord make you to increaſe and abound in love one toward another, and towards all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may eſtabliſh your hearts unblameable in holineſs before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all his ſaints.*

It is foretold by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that in the

the laſt days the love of many ſhall wax cold, Matth. xxiv. 12. And truly this is the ſymptom of a decaying and fading Chriſtian and church. Love is the vital ſpirits of a Chriſtian, which are the principles of all motion and lively operation: when there is a deliquium in theſe, the ſoul is in a decay; it is ſo comprehenſive an evil, as alone is ſufficient to make an evil time; and beſides, it is the argument and evidence, as well as the root and fountain, of abounding iniquity, becauſe this is the epidemical diſeaſe of the preſent time, love cooled, and paſſion heated; whence proceed all the feveriſh diſtempers, contentions, wars and diviſions, which have brought the church of God near to expiring: therefore being mindful of that of the Apoſtle, Heb. x. 24. I would think it pertinent *to conſider one another,* and provoke again *unto love and to good works*; it was the great charge that Chriſt had againſt *Epheſus, Thou haſt left thy firſt love*; I ſhall therefore ſhew the excellency and neceſſity of this grace, that ſo we may *remember from whence we have fallen and repent,* that we may *do the firſt works,* leſt he *come quickly and remove our candleſtick,* Rev. ii. 4, 5.

CHAP. II.

1. THEN it might endear this Chriſtian virtue unto us, that God propones himſelf as the pattern of it, that Chriſt holds out himſelf as the rare example of it for our imitation. It is what doth moſt endear God to creatures, and certainly it muſt likewiſe appretiate them one to another: 1 *John* iv. 7, 8. "Beloved, let us love one another: "for love is of God; and every one that loveth, "is born of God, and knoweth God. He that lov- "eth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."

Matth. v. 44, 45. " But I ſay unto you, Love yo
" enemies, bleſs them that curſe you, do good
" them that hate you, and pray for them which
" ſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you: that y
" may be the children of your Father which is
" heaven, for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the e
" and on the good, and ſendeth rain on the j
" and on the unjuſt." *Eph.* v. 1, 2. " Be ye the
" fore followers of God, as dear children; a
" walk in love. as Chriſt alſo loved us, and ha
" given himſelf for us, an offering and a ſacrifi
" to God, for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour. *John* xi
" 35. By this ſhall all men know that ye are
" diſciples, if ye love one another." Now the f
lowing of ſo rare an example, and imitating of
nobie and high a pattern, doth exalt the ſoul int
royalty and dignity, that it *dwells in God and G*
in it, John iv. 16. This is the higheſt point
conformity with God, and the neareſt reſemblan
of our Father: To be like him in wiſdom, th
wretched aim did caſt men as low as hell; but
aſpire unto a likeneſs in love, lifts up the ſoul
high as heaven, even to a mutual inhabitation.

II. It ſhould add an exceeding weight unto
that we have not only ſo high a pattern, but ſo e
cellent a motive: " God ſo loved; and herein
" love, not that we loved God, but that he lov
" us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation f
" our ſins;" therefore " if God ſo loved us,
" ought alſo to love one another," 1 *John* iv.
10, 11. " Walk in love, as Chriſt alſo hath lov
" us, and hath given himſelf for us," *Eph.* v.
Here are the topicks of the moſt vehement perſu
ſion: there is no invention can afford ſo conſtrai
ing a motive, God ſo loving us, ſinful and miſerab
us, that he gave his only begotten Son, that
might live through him; and Chriſt ſo loving
th

at he gave himſelf a ſacrifice for ſin. O then ! ho ſhould live to himſelf, when Chriſt died for hers? And who ſhould not love, when "God ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all: God commendeth his love to us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us," *Rom.* viii. 32. and v. 8. and xiv. 7, 8.

III. Join to this ſo earneſt and preſſing a command, even the latter will of him to whom we owe at we are, and are redeemed; that is the burden e lays on us, this is all the recompence he ſeeks r his unparalleled love, "This is my command, that as I have loved you, ye love one another," hn xiii. 34. Your *goodneſs* cannot *extend to me*, erefore I aſſign all the beneficence and bounty ye we to me, I give it over to theſe whom I have ved, and have not loved my life for them; now, ys he, whatſoever ye would count yourſelf obliged to do to me, if I were on the earth among you, it to theſe poor ones whom I have left behind e, and this is all the teſtimony of gratitude I crave. *Matth.* xxv. 34 to 40. "Then ſhall the King ſay unto them on his right hand, Come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirſty, and ye gave me drink: I was a ſtranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was ſick, and ye viſited me: I was in priſon, and ye came unto me. Then ſhall the righteous anſwer him, ſaying, Lord, when ſaw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? Or thirſty, and gave thee drink? When ſaw we thee a ſtranger, and took thee in? Or naked, and clothed thee? Or when ſaw we thee ſick, or in priſon, and came unto thee? And the King ſhall anſwer, and ſay unto them, Verily I ſay unto you, In as much as ye have done

" done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethre
" ye have done it unto me. Theſe ye have alwa
" with you, but me ye have not always." It
ſtrange how earneſtly, how ſolicitouſly, how pu
gently he preſſes the exhortation, *John* xiii. 34, 3
" A new commandment I give unto you, That y
" love one another; as I have loved you, that y
" love one another. By this ſhall all men kno
" that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one t
" another." And xv. 12 and 17. " This is m
" commandment, That ye love one another as
" have loved you. Theſe things I command you
" that ye love one another." And his Apoſtles a
ter him, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 9. " But as touching brotherl
" love, ye need not that I write unto you: for y
" yourſelves are taught of God to love one ano
" ther. *Coloſſ.* iii. 14. And above all theſe things
" put on charity, which is the bond of perfectneſs
" 1 *Pet.* iv. 8. And above all things have ferven
" charity among yourſelves: for charity ſhall co
" ver the multitude of ſins." But above all that be
loved diſciple, who being ſo intimate with Jeſu
Chriſt, we may lawfully conceive he was inured to
that affectionate frame by his converſe with Chriſt;
and has been moſt mindful of Chriſt's teſtamentary
injunctions; he cannot ſpeak three ſentences but
this is one of them. All which may convince us o
this one thing, that there is a greater moment and
weight of Chriſtianity in charity than in the moſt
part of theſe things for which Chriſtians *bite and*
devour one another: It is the fundamental law o
the goſpel, to which all poſitive precepts and ordi-
nances ſhould ſtoop: Unity in judgment is very
needful for the well being of Chriſtians; but Chriſt's
laſt words perſuade this, that unity in affection is
more eſſential and fundamental; this is the badge
he left to his diſciples; if we caſt away this upon

every

very different apprehenſion of mind, we diſown the maſter, and diſclaim his token and badge.

IV. The Apoſtle *Paul* puts a high note of commendation upon charity, when he ſtiles it *the bond of perfection*; "above all things, *ſays he*, put on charity which is the bond of perfection, Col. iii. 14. I am ſure it hath not ſuch a high place in the minds and practice of Chriſtians now, as it hath in the roll of the parts and members of the new man here ſet down: here it is above all; with us it is below all, even below every apprehenſion of doubtful truths: an agreement in the conception of any poor petty controverſial matter of the times, is made the badge of Chriſtianity, and ſet in an eminent place above all what the Apoſtle mentions, in the 12th verſe, "bowels of mercy, kindneſs, gentleneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, long-ſuffering:" Nay, charity itſelf is but a waiting handmaid to this miſtreſs.

But let us conſider the Apoſtle's ſignificant character he puts on it, it is a *bond of perfection*, as it were, a bundle of graces, and chain of virtues, even the very cream and flower of many graces combined: It is the ſweet reſult of the united force of all graces; it is the very head and heart of the *new man*, which we are invited to *put on*, *Above all put on charity*: All theſe fore-mentioned perfections are bound and tied together, by the girdle of charity and love, to the new man. When charity is born and brought forth, it may be ſtiled *Gad*, for a *troop cometh*, *chorus virtutum*, a troop or company of virtues which it leads and commands. Charity hath a tender heart; for it hath *bowels of mercies*: Such a compaſſionate and melting temper of ſpirit, that the miſery or calamity, whether bodily or ſpiritual of other men, makes an impreſſion upon it; and therefore it is the Chriſtian ſympathy which

which affects itſelf with others afflictions. If other be moved, it moves itſelf through conſort an ſympathy. This is not only extended to bodil and outward infirmities, but, moſt of all, to infirmi ties of mind and heart, error, ignorance, darkneſ falling and failing in tentation: "We are mad "prieſts to God our Father, to have compaſſio "on them who are ignorant and out of the way "for that we ourſelves are alſo compaſſed with in "firmity," *Rev.* i. 6. and *Heb.* v. 2. Then, lov hath a humble mind, *humbleneſs of mind*, elſe i could not ſtoop and condeſcend to others of lo degree; and therefore Chriſt exhorts above all t lowlineſs; *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowl in heart:* If a man be not lowly, to ſit down belo offences and infirmities, his love cannot riſe abov them. Self-love is the greateſt enemy to true Chri ſtian love, and pride is the fountain of ſelf-love; becauſe it is impoſſible that, in this life, there ſhoul be an exact correſpondence between the thought and ways of Chriſtians; therefore it is not poſſible to keep this bond of perfection unbroken, except there be a mutual condeſcendence. Self-love would have all conformed to it; and if that be not, there is the rent preſently: but humbleneſs of mind can conform itſelf to all things, and this keeps the bond faſt. Then charity, by the link of humility, hath meekneſs chained unto it, and kindneſs; love is of a ſweet complexion, meek and kind: Pride is the mother of paſſion, humbleneſs the mother of meek neſs. The inward affection is compoſed by meek neſs, and the outward actions adorned by gentle neſs and kindneſs. O that ſweet compoſure of ſpirit! *The heart of the wicked is as the troubled ſea*, no reſt no quiet in it, continual tempeſts raiſing continual waves of diſquiet: an unmeek ſpirit is like a boil ing pot, it troubles itſelf and annoys others. Then,

at

length, charity, by lowlineſs and meekneſs, is the moſt durable, enduring, long-ſuffering thing in the world; *with long-ſuffering, forbearing one another in love*; theſe are the only principles of patience and longanimity. Anger and paſſion is expreſſed in ſcripture under the name of *haſte*; and it is a ſudden, furious, haſty thing; a raſh, inconſiderate, impatient thing; more haſty than ſpeedy. Now the ſpecial exerciſes and operations of theſe graces are in the 13th verſe, "forbearing one another, and "forgiving one another," according to Chriſt's example: and indeed theſe are ſo high and ſublime works, as charity muſt yoke all the fore-mentioned graces, unite them all in one troop, for the accompliſhing of them. And the great and ſweet fruit of all this is comprehended in the 15th verſe, "The "peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which "ye are called in one body:" Peace with God is not here meant, but the peace which God hath made up between men: All were ſhattered and rent aſunder, the Lord hath by his Son Jeſus Chriſt gathered ſo many into one body, the church; and by one Spirit quickens all: Now where love is predominant, there is a ſweet peace and harmony between all the members of this one body; and this peace and tranquillity of affections rules and predomines over all theſe luſts, which are the mineries of contentions, and ſtrifes, and wars.

V. Add unto this another ſpecial mark of excellency that this Apoſtle puts on charity, or Chriſtian love, "The end of the commandment is "charity, out of a pure heart, of a good conſcience, "and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. If this were duly pondered, I do believe it would fill all hearts with aſtoniſhment, and faces with confuſion, that they neglected the weightier matters of the law; and overſtretched ſome other particular duties,

ties, to fill up the place of this, which is the en
the fulfilling of the law. It appears by this th
charity is a cream of graces; it is the ſpirit a
quinteſſence extracted out of theſe cardinal grac
" unfeigned faith, a good conſcience, a pure heart
It is true, the immediate end of the law, as it is no
expounded unto us, is to drive us to believe in Je
Chriſt, as it is expreſſed, *Rom.* x. 4. " Chriſt
" the end of the law for righteouſneſs to every o
" that believeth:" But this believing in Chriſt
not the laſt end of it; faith unfeigned in a Medi
tor is intentionally for this, to give the anſwer
a good conſcience in the blood of Chriſt, and
purify the heart by the water of the Spirit; and
to bring about at length, by ſuch a ſweet compa
the righteouſneſs of the law to be fulfilled by lo
in us, which by divine imputation is fulfilled to u
Now conſider the context, and it ſhall yield muc
edification. Some teachers, 1 *Tim.* i. 4. exerciſe
themſelves and others in endleſs genealogies, which
tho' they contained ſome truth in them, yet the
were perplexed, and brought no edification to ſoul
Curioſity might go round in ſuch debates, and be
wilder itſelf as in a labyrinth; but they did rathe
multiply diſputes than bring true edification in th
faith and love of God and men. Now, ſays he, the
do wholly miſtake the end of the law, of the doc
trine of the ſcripture; the end and great purpoſe o
it is love, which proceeds from faith in Chriſt
purifying the heart; this is the ſum of all, to wor
ſhip God in faith and purity, and to love one ano
ther; and whatſoever debates and queſtions do tend
to the breach of this bond, and have no eminen
and remarkable advantage in them, ſuppoſe they be
conceived to be about matters of conſcience, ye
the entertaining and proſecuting them to the pre
judice of this, is a manifeſt violence offered to the

law

ar of God, which is the rule of conſcience; it is perverting of ſcripture and conſcience to a wrong end. I ſay then that charity and Chriſtian love ſhould be the moderatrix of all our actions towards men; from thence they ſhould proceed, and according to this rule be formed. I am perſuaded if this rule were followed, the preſent differences in judgment of godly men, about ſuch matters as miniſter mere queſtions, would ſoon be buried in the gulf of Chriſtian affection.

VI. Now to complete the account of the eminence of this grace, take that remarkable chapter of Paul's, 1 *Cor.* xiii. where he inſtitutes the compariſon between it and other graces, and in the end pronounces on its behalf, *the greateſt of theſe is charity*. I wonder how we do pleaſe ourſelves, as that we had attained already, when we do not ſo much as labour to be acquainted with this, in which the life of Chriſtianity conſiſts: without which faith is dead, our profeſſion vain, our other duties and endeavours for the truth unacceptable to God and men. "Yet I ſhew you a more excellent way," ſays he in the end of the former chapter: And this is the more excellent way, charity and love, more excellent than gifts, ſpeaking with tongues, propheſying, &c. And is it not more excellent than the knowledge and acknowledgment of ſome preſent queſtionable matters, about governments, treaties, and ſuch like, and far more than every punctilio of them? But he goes higher, ſuppoſe a man could ſpend all his ſubſtance upon the maintenance of ſuch an opinion, and give his life for the defence of it, though in itſelf it be commendable; ye if he want charity and love to his brethren, if he overſtretch that point of conſcience to the breach of Chriſtian affection, and duties flowing from it, it *profits him nothing*: then certainly charity muſt

rule

rule our external actions, and have the predom
nant hand in the uſe of all gifts, in the venting
all opinions. Whatſoever knowledge and ability
man hath, charity muſt employ it, and uſe it
without this, duties and graces make a noiſe, bu
they are ſhallow and empty within. Now he ſhew
the ſweet properties of it, and good effects of i
How univerſal an influence it hath on all thing
but eſpecially how neceſſary it is to keep the unit
of the church.

Charity is kind and ſuffereth long μακροθυμεῖ, it
longanimous or magnanimous: and there is indee
no great, truly great, mind but it is patient and lon
ſuffering; it is a great weakneſs and puſillanimit
to be ſoon angry; ſuch a ſpirit hath not the rule
itſelf, but is in bondage to its own luſt; but *he tha
ruleth his ſpirit is greater than he that taketh a city*
Now, it is much of this affection of love that ove
rules paſſion: there is a greatneſs and height in i
to love them that deſerve not well of us, to be *kin
to the unfaithful, not to be eaſily provoked*, and no
ſoon diſobliged. A fool's wrath is preſently known
it is a folly and weakneſs of ſpirit, which love
much love cures and amends. It ſuffers much un
kindneſs, and long ſuffers it, and yet can be kind

Charity envieth not. Envy is the ſeed of all con
tention, and ſelf-love brings it forth. When ever
man deſires to be eſteemed chief, and would hav
preheminence among others, their ways and cou
ſes muſt interfere one with another: it is this th
makes diſcord, every man would abate from ano
ther's eſtimation, that he may add to his own
none lives content with his own lot or ſtation, an
it is the aſpiring beyond that which puts all th
wheels out of courſe. I believe this is the root
many contentions among Chriſtians, the apprehen
ſion of ſlighting, the conceit of diſreſpect, and ſuc
like

kindles the flame of difference, and heightens least offence to an unpardonable injury. But *rity envieth not* where it may ly quietly low: gh it be under the feet of others, and beneath own due place; yet it envieth not, it can ly entedly ſo: ſuppoſe it be ſlighted and deſpiſed, it takes it not highly, becauſe it is *lowly in mind. Charity is not puffed up, and vaunteth not itſelf.* harity have gifts and graces beyond others, it ains itſelf, with the bridle of modeſty and hu-ity, from vaunting or boaſting, or any thing in carriage that may ſavour of conceit. Pride is a admirer, and deſpiſes others, and to pleaſe itſelf es not to diſpleaſe others. There is nothing ſo comportable in human or Chriſtian ſociety, ſo apt alienate others affections: for the more we take our own affection to ourſelves, we ſhall have the from others. O theſe golden rules of Chriſtian lking! Rom. xii. 10, 16. *Be kindly affectionate to another, with brotherly love, in honour pre-ring one another. Mind not high things, but con-ſend to men of low eſtate. Be not wiſe in your own eits.* O but that were a comely ſtriſe among riſtians! each to prefer another in unfeigned e; and in *lowlineſs of mind*, each to *eſteem ano-r better than himſelf*, Philip. ii. 3. *Knowledge ffeth up*, ſays this Apoſtle 1 Cor. viii. 1. *but cha-y edifieth*; it is but a ſwelling and tumour of d, but love is ſolid piety and real religion.

Then *charity* doth nothing unſeemly, *behaveth itſelf unſeemly*, 1 Cor. xiii. 5. Vanity and lling of mind will certainly break forth into e unſeemly carriage, as vain eſtimation, and h like; but charity keeps a ſweet decorum in all carriage, ſo as not to provoke and irritate others, yet to expoſe itſelf to contempt or mockery. the word may taken thus, it is not *faſtidious*;

it accounts not itſelf diſgraced and abuſed to *con-ſcend to men of low eſtate*; it can with its Ma- bow down to *waſh a diſciple's feet*, and not th- it unſeemly: whatſoever it ſubmit to in doing ſuffering, it is not aſhamed of it, as that it w- not ſuitable and comely.

Charity ſeeketh not her own things. Self-de- and true love are inſeparable; ſelf-love make- monopoly of all things to its own intereſt; - this is moſt oppoſite to Chriſtian affection - communion, which puts all in one bank. If ev- one of the members ſhould ſeek its own things, a- not the good of the whole body, what a miſera- diſtemper would it cauſe in the body? *We are c- led into one body in Chriſt*, and therefore we ſho- *look not on our own things only, but every man - on the things of others*, Philip. ii. 4. There is a p- lick intereſt of ſaints mutual edification in faith a- love, which charity will prefer to its own priv- intereſt. Addictedneſs to our own apprehenſi- and too much ſelf-overweaning and ſelf-pleaſi- is the grand enemy of that peace to which we - called into one body. Since one Spirit informs a- enlivens all the members, what a monſtroſity i- for one member to ſeek its own things, and atte- its own private intereſt only, as if it were a diſti- body.

Charity is not eaſily provoked. This is the ſtreig- and ſolid firmneſs of it, that it is not ſoon mo- with external impreſſions. It is long-ſuffering, ſuffers long and much; it will not be ſhaken violent and weighty preſſures of injuries; wh- there is much provocation given, yet it is not p- voked: now to complete it, it is not eaſily prov- ed at light offences. It is ſtrange how little a ſp- of injuries puts all in a flame, becauſe our ſpirits - as gun-powder ſo capable of combuſtion thro-

corrupti-

ruption. How ridiculous, for the moſt part, are e cauſes of our wrath? For light things we are avily moved; and for ridiculous things ſadly, en as children who fall out among themſelves for ys and trifles, or as beaſts that are provoked upon e very ſhew of a colour, as red or ſuch like. We uld ſave ourſelves much labour, if we could judge fore we ſuffer ourſelves to be provoked: but now follow the firſt appearance of wrong; and be- g once moved from without, we continue our mmotion within, leſt we ſhould ſeem to be angry thout a cauſe. But charity hath a more ſolid ndation, it *dwells in God, for God is love*; and is truly great, truly high, and looks down with a dfaſt countenance upon theſe lower things. The per world is continually calm and ſerene; no uds, no tempeſts there; no winds, nothing to ſturb the harmonious and uniform motion; but is this lower world that is troubled and toſſed th tempeſts, and obſcured with clouds. So a ſoul elling in God by love, is exalted above the ody region, he is calm, quiet, ſerene, and is not ſturbed or interrupted in his motion of love to d or men.

Charity thinketh no evil. Charity is apt to take things in the beſt ſenſe: if a thing may be ſub- t to diverſe acceptations, it can put the beſt con- ſtion on it; it is ſo benign and good in its own ure, that it is not inclinable to ſuſpect others: deſires to condemn no man, but would gladly, far as reaſon and conſcience will permit, abſolve ry man: it is ſo far from deſire of revenge, that not provoked or troubled with an injury; for were nothing elſe but to wrong itſelf becauſe rs have wronged it already: and it is ſo far wronging others, that it will not willingly ſo ch as think evil of them. Yet if need require,

charity can execute juſtice, and inflict chaſtiſemen
not out of deſire of another's miſery, but out of lo
and compaſſion to mankind. *Charitas non pu*
quia peccatum eſt ſed ne peccaretur; it looks mo
to prevention of future ſin, than to revenge of
bypaſt fault; and can do all without any diſco
poſure of ſpirit, as a phyſician cuts a vein witho
anger, *Quis enim cui medetur iraſcitur?* Who
angry at his own patient?

Charity rejoiceth not in iniquity. Charity is n
defiled in itſelf, tho' it condeſcend to all: tho'
can love and wiſh well to evil men, yet it rejoice
not in iniquity: it is like the ſun's light that ſhi
on a dunghill, and is not defiled, receives no ti
ture from it. Some baſe and wicked ſpirits mak
ſport to do miſchief themſelves, and *take pleaſure*
others *that do it*: but charity rejoices in no iniqu
ty or injuſtice, tho' it were done to its own enem
It cannot take pleaſure in the unjuſt ſufferings
any who hate it; becauſe it hath no enemy b
ſin and iniquity, and hates nothing elſe with a pe
fect hatred. Therefore whatever advantage ſhou
redound to itſelf by other mens iniquities; it ca
not rejoice, that iniquity, its capital enemy, ſhou
reign and prevail. But *it rejoiceth in the truth*; t
advancement and progreſs of others in the way
truth and holineſs is its pleaſure: tho' that ſhou
eclipſe its own glory, yet it looks not on it with
evil eye; if it can find out any good in them th
are enemies to it, it is not grieved to find it a
know it, but can rejoice at any thing which ma
give ground of good conſtruction of them. The
is nothing more beautiful in its eyes than to ſee
very one get their own due, tho' it alone ſhou
come behind.

Charity beareth all things. By nature we are u
daunted heifers, cannot bear any thing patiently
bu

but charity is accuſtomed to the yoke, to the yoke of reproaches and injuries from others, to a burden of other mens infirmities and failings. We would all be borne upon others ſhoulders, but we cannot put our own ſhoulders under other mens burden, according to that royal law of Chriſt, Rom. xv. 1. *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe ourſelves*; and Gal. vi. 2. *Bear ye one anothers burdens, and ſo fulfil the law of Chriſt*; that is the law of love no queſtion. *Charity believeth all things.* Our nature is malignant and wicked, and therefore moſt ſuſpicious and jealous, and apt to take all in the worſt part: but charity hath much candor and humanity in it, and can believe well of every man, and believe all things as far as truth will permit. It knows that grace can dwell beſide a man's ſins; it knows that itſelf is ſubject to ſuch like infirmities: therefore it is not a rigid and cenſorious judger, it allows as much latitude to others as it would deſire of others. It is true it is not blind and ignorant; it is judicious, and hath eyes that can diſcern between colours; *credit omnia credenda, ſperat omnia ſperanda*, it hopes all things that are hopeful, and believes all things that are believable. If love have not ſufficient evidences, yet it believes if there be ſome probabilities to the contrary as well as for it, the weight of charity inclines to the better part, and ſo caſts the balance of opinion and perſuaſion: yet being ſometimes deceived, ſhe hath reaſon to be watchful and wiſe; for *the ſimple believeth every word.* If charity cannot have ground of believing any good; yet it hopes well: *Qui non eſt hodie cras magis aptus erit*, ſays charity, and therefore it is patient and gentle, waiting on all, if *peradventure God may give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth*, 2 Tim. ii. 25. Charity would account it both atheiſm and

blaſphemy, to ſay ſuch a man cannot, will no
find mercy. But to pronounce of ſuch as have bee
often approven in the conſcience of all, and ſeale
into many hearts, that they will never find merc
that they have no grace, becauſe of ſome failin
in practice and differences from us, it were not i
ſobriety but madneſs. It is certainly love and i
dulgence to ourſelves, that makes us aggrava
other mens faults to ſuch a height: ſelf-love loo
on other mens failings through a multiplying
magnifying glaſs; but ſhe puts her own faults b
hind her back, *Non videt quod in mantica quat
tergo eſt*, therefore ſhe can ſuffer much in herſ
but nothing in others; and certainly much ſe
forbearance and indulgence can ſpare little for
thers. But charity is juſt contrary, ſhe is moſt rig
on her own behalf, will not pardon herſelf eaſil
knows no revenge but what is ſpoken of 2 Cor. v
11. *ſelf-revenge*, and hath no *indignation* but agai
herſelf: Thus ſhe can ſpare much candor and fo
bearance for others, and hath little or nothing
indignation left behind to conſume on others.

Charity never faileth. This is the laſt note
commendation. Things have their excellency fr
their uſe and from their continuance; both
here. Nothing ſo uſeful, no ſuch friend of hum
or Chriſtian ſociety as charity, the advantage o
reacheth all things. But then, it is moſt permane
and durable: When all ſhall go, it ſhall remai
when ordinances, and knowledge attained by me
and ordinances ſhall evaniſh, charity ſhall abi
and then receive its conſummation. Faith of thi
inevident and obſcure, ſhall be drowned in the
ſion of ſeeing God's face clearly; hope of thing
come ſhall be exhauſted in the poſſeſſion and f
tion of them: But love only remains in its o
nature and notion; only it is perfected by the
dit

ion of ſo many degrees as may ſuit that bleſſed ate. Therefore, methinks it ſhould be the ſtudy all ſaints who believe immortality, and hope for nal life, to put on that garment of charity, which livery of all the inhabitants above. We might heaven upon earth, as far as is poſſible, if we elt in love, and love dwelt in and poſſeſſed our rts. What an unſuitable thing might a believer k it, to hate him in this world, whom he muſt eternally? And to contend and ſtrive with e, even for matters of ſmall moment, with bit-neſs and rigidity, with whom he ſhall have an nal, uninterrupted unity and fellowſhip? Should not be aſſaying here, how that glorious garment us? And truly there is nothing makes a man eaven-like or God-like as this, much love and rity.

Now there is one conſideration might perſuade me more unto it, that *here we know but darkly in part*, and therefore our knowledge, at beſt, t obſcure and inevident; oft times ſubject to y miſtakes and miſapprehenſions of truth, ac-ding as *mediums* repreſent them: and therefore e muſt be ſome latitude of love allowed one to her in this ſtate of imperfection; elſe it is im-ible to keep unity, and we muſt conflict often h our own ſhadows, and bite and devour one her for ſome deceiving appearances. The im-fection and obſcurity of knowledge ſhould make men jealous of themſelves; eſpecially in matters doubtful nature, and not ſo clearly determined ſcripture. Becauſe our knowledge is weak, ſhall love be none? Nay, rather let charity grow nger, and aſpire unto perfection; becauſe know-e is imperfect: What is wanting in knowledge, us make up in affection; and let the gap of rance in judgment be ſwallowed up with the

bowels of mercies, and love, and humbleneſs
mind: And then we ſhall have hid our infirm
of underſtanding as much as may be. Thus
may go hand in hand together to our Fathe
houſe, where, at length, we muſt be together.

CHAP. III.

I May briefly reduce the chief perſuading moti
to this ſo needful and ſo much deſiderated gr
into ſome three or four heads. All things with
and without perſuade to it; but eſpecially the rig
conſideration of the love of God in Chriſt, the w
and the impartial reflection on ourſelves, the co
ſideration of our brethren whom we are comman
ed to love, and the thorough inſpection into t
nature and uſe of the grace itſelf.

In conſideration of the firſt, a ſoul might arg
itſelf into a complacency with it, and thus perſua
itſelf; *He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for G
is love*, 1 John iv. 8. And ſince he that hath kno
and believed the love that God hath to us, m
certainly *dwell in love*; ſince theſe two have ſu
a ſtrait indiſſoluble connexion, then, as I would n
declare to all my atheiſm and my ignorance of Go
I will ſtudy to love my brethren: And that I m
love them, I will give myſelf to the ſearch of Go
love, which is the place, *locus inventionis*, whenc
may find out the ſtrongeſt and moſt effectual m
dium to perſuade my mind, and to conſtrain m
heart to Chriſtian affection.

FIRST then. When I conſider that ſo glorio
and great a Majeſty, ſo high and holy an O
ſelf-ſufficient and all-ſufficient, who needs not
abro

mind to ſeek delight, becauſe all happineſs and delight is incloſed within his own boſom: Yet that he can love a creature, yea and be reconciled to ſo ſinful a creature, which he might cruſh as eaſily as ſpeak a word; that he can place his delight on ſo unworthy and baſe an object: O! how much more ſhould I, a poor wretched creature, love my fellow-creature, ofttimes better than myſelf, and, for the moſt part, not much worſe? There is an infinite diſtance and diſproportion betwixt God and man; yet he came over all that to love man: What difficulty ſhould I have then to place my affection on my equal at worſt, and often better? There cannot be any proportionable diſtance betwixt the higheſt and loweſt, between the richeſt and pooreſt, between the moſt wiſe and the moſt ignorant, between the moſt gracious and the moſt ungodly, as there is between the infinite God and a finite angel. Should then the mutual infirmities and failings of Chriſtians, be an inſuperable and impaſſible gulf, as between heaven and hell, that none can paſs over by a bridge of love to either? *If God ſo loved us, ſhould not we love one another?* 1 John iv. 11. And beſides, when I conſider that God hath not only loved me, but my brethren who were worthy of hatred, with an everlaſting love, and paſt over all that was in them, and hath *ſpread his ſkirt over their nakedneſs, and made it a time of love*, which was a time of loathing: How can I withhold my affection where God hath beſtowed his? Are they not infinitely more unworthy of his than mine? Since infinite wrongs hath not changed his, ſhall poor, petty, and light offences hinder mine? That my love concenter with God's on the ſame perſons, is it not enough?

Next, *That Jeſus Chriſt the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth*, who was the Father's delight from eternity, and in whom he delighted;

lighted; yet notwithſtanding could *rejoice in t habitable places of the earth*, and ſo love poor wretch ed men, *yet enemies*, that he gave himſelf for them that God ſo loved that he gave his Son, and Chri ſo loved that he gave himſelf a ſacrifice for ſin both for me and others: O! who ſhould not, o will not be conſtrained, in beholding this mirrou of incomparable and ſpotleſs love, to love others 1 John iv. 9, 10, 11. *In this was manifeſted the lov of God towards us, becauſe that God ſent his only be gotten Son into the world, that we might live throug him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but tha he loved us, and ſent his Son to be the propitiation for our ſins. Beloved, if God ſo loved us, we ough alſo to love one another.* Eph. v. 2. *And walk in love, as Chriſt alſo hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us, an offering and a ſacrifice to God for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour*; eſpecially when he ſeems to require no other thing, and impoſes no more grievous command upon us for recompence of all his labour of love. John xiii. 34, 35. *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye alſo love one another. By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſciples, if have love one to another.* If all that was in me did not alienate his love from me, how ſhould any thing in others eſtrange our love to them? If God be ſo kind to his enemies, and Chriſt ſo loving that he gives his life for his enemies to make them friends; what ſhould we do to our enemies, what to our friends? This one example may make all created love to bluſh and be aſhamed; how narrow, how limited, how ſelfiſh is it?

Thirdly, If God hath forgiven me ſo many grievous offences, if he hath pardoned ſo hainous and inſumerable injuries, that amount to a kind of infiniteneſs in number and quality, O how much more

am I bound to forgive my brethren a few and trivial offences? Col. iii. 13. *Forbearing another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.* Eph. iv. 32. *And be ye kind one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* With what face can I pray, *Lord, forgive me my sins,* when I may meet with such a retortion, thou canst not forgive thy brethrens sins, infinitely less both in number and degree? *Matth.* vi. 15. "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses." What unparalleled ingratitude were it, what monstrous wickedness, that after he hath forgiven all our debt, because we desired him, yet we should not have compassion on our fellow-servants even as he had pity on us? O! what a dreadful sound will that be in the ears of many Christians, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all thy debt, because thou desiredest me. Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servants, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses," *Matth.* xviii. 32, 33, 34, 35. When we cannot dispense with one penny, how should he dispense with his talents? And when we cannot pardon ten, how should he forgive ten thousand? When he hath forgiven my brother all his iniquity, may not I pardon one? Shall I impute that which God will not impute; or discover that which God hath covered? How should I expect he should be merciful to me, when I cannot shew mercy to my brother? *Psal.* xviii. 25.

"With

" With the merciful thou wilt ſhew thyſelf m
" ful." Shall I, for one or few offences, hate,
and devour him for whom Chriſt died, and lo
not his life to ſave him? *Rom.* xiv. 15. and 1
viii. 11.

IN the next place. If a Chriſtian do but take
impartial view of himſelf, he cannot but t
reaſon himſelf to a meek, compoſed and aff
tionate temper towards other brethren. What i
in another that offends me, which if I do ſea
within, I will not either find the ſame, or wo
or as evil in myſelf? Is there a *mote in my brothe
eye?* Perhaps there may be a *beam* in my ow
and why then ſhould I look to the *mote that is
my brother's eye?* Matth. vii. 3. When I look i
wardly, I find a *deſperately wicked heart*, whi
lodges all that iniquity I beheld in others: And
I be not ſo ſenſible of it, it is becauſe it is alſo d
ceitful above all things, and would flatter me i
mine own eyes, *Jer.* xvii. 9. If my brother offen
me in ſome things, how do theſe evaniſh out o
ſight in the view of my own guiltineſs before God
and of the abominations of my own heart, know
to his Holineſs and to my conſcience? Sure I can
not ſee ſo much evil in my brother as I find in my
ſelf; I ſee but his outſide, but I know my own
heart; and whenever I retire within this, I find
the ſea of corruption ſo great, that I wonder not a
the ſtreams which break forth in others: But all my
wonder is that God hath ſet bounds to it in me or
in any. Whenever I find my ſpirit riſing againſt
the infirmities of others, and my mind ſwelling over
them, I repreſs myſelf with this thought, *I myſelf
alſo am a man*, as *Peter* ſaid to *Cornelius* when he
would have worſhipped him: As he reſtrained
another's idolizing of him, I may cure my own
ſelf.

idolizing heart. Is it any thing ſtrange that men fail, and ſinful men fall? *Is not all fleſh , and all the* perfection and *goodlineſs of it as flower of the field?* Iſa. xl. 6. *Is not every man his beſt eſtate altogether vanity?* Pſal. xxxix. 5. not *man's breath in his noſtrils?* Iſa. ii. 22. And not I myſelf a man? Therefore I will not be minded but fear, *Rom.* xi. 2. I will not be ved to indignation, but provoked to compaſſion, owing that I myſelf am compaſſed with infirmi-, *Heb.* v. 2.

dly, As a man may perſuade himſelf to charity the examination of his own heart and ways: So may inforce upon his ſpirit a meek and com-ſſionate ſtamp, by the conſideration of his own ilty, what he may fall into. This is the Apoſtle's e, *Gal.* vi. 1. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are ſpiritual," and pretend to "reſtore ſuch an one in the ſpirit of meekneſs:" o not pleaſe yourſelves with a falſe notion of zeal, inking to cover your impertinent rigidity by it; as you would do if your own arm were disjoint-, ſet it in, reſtore it tenderly and meekly, *conſi-ering yourſelves that ye alſo may be tempted.* Some are more given to reproaching and inſulting than indful of reſtoring: Therefore their reproofs are not tempered with oil, that they may not break the head; but mixed with gall and vinegar to ſet on edge the teeth. But whenever thou looks upon the infirmities of others, then conſider thyſelf firſt, before you pronounce ſentence on them, and thou ſhalt be conſtrained to beſtow that charity to others which thou haſt need of thyſelf: *Veniam damnus petimuſque viciſſim.* If a man have need of charity from his brother, let him not be hard in giving it; if he know his own weakneſs and frailty, ſure he may ſuppoſe ſuch a thing may likely fall out that he

he may be tempted and ſuccumb in it: For th
needs nothing for the bringing forth of ſin in
but occaſion and temptation, as the bringing of
near gun-powder. And truly he who hath no all
ance of love to give to an infirm and weak broth
he will be in *mala fide*, in an evil capacity, to ſ
what he would not give. Now the fountain of
charitable and harſh dealing is imported in the
verſe, "If any man thinks himſelf to be someth
"when he is nothing, he deceives himſelf:" Si
all mortal men are nothing, vanity, altogether
nity, and leſs than vanity; he that would ſe
ſomething, and ſeems ſo to himſelf, he delu
himſelf. Hence is our inſulting fierceneſs, he
our ſupercilious rigour: Every man apprehen
ſome excellency in himſelf beyond another. T
away pride, and charity ſhall enter, and mode
ſhall be its companion. But now we mock ourſelv
and deceive ourſelves, by building the weight
our pretended zeal upon ſuch a vain and rott
foundation, as a groſs practical fundamental lie
ſelf-conceit, of a conceit of nothing. Now the
poſtle furniſhes us with an excellent remedy agai
this in the 4th verſe, "Let a man prove himſ
"and his own work, and then he ſhall have
"joicing in himſelf alone, and not in another
A word worthy to be faſtened by the maſter of
ſemblies in the heart of all Chriſtians; and inde
this nail driven in would drive out all conceit. Hen
is our ruin, that we *compare ourſelves among o
ſelves*, and in ſo doing *we are not wiſe*, 2 Cor.
12. For we know not our own true value, only
raiſe the price according to the market, ſo to ſpe
we meaſure ourſelves by another man's meaſur
and build up our eſtimation upon the diſeſteem
others; and how much others diſpleaſe, ſo much
pleaſe ourſelves: But, ſays the Apoſtle, *Let eve
m*

prove his own work, ſearch his own conſcience, pare himſelf to the perfect rule; and then, if find all well, he may indeed glory of himſelf. that which thou haſt by compariſon with others, not thine own, thou muſt come down from all advantages of ground, if thou would have thy meaſure. And indeed, if thou prove thyſelf thy work after this manner, thou wilt be the to reprove thyſelf, thou ſhalt have that glory to thee, that is none at all; for *every man ſhall his own burden*, when he appears before the gment-ſeat of God: There is no place for ſuch aginations and compariſons in the Lord's judg-nt.

dly, When a Chriſtian looks within his own rt, he finds an inclination and deſire to have the of others, even though his conſcience witneſs he deſerves it not; he finds an approbation of good and righteous command of God, that ers ſhould love him. Now hence he may per-de himſelf, Is it ſo ſweet and pleaſant to me to loved of others, even tho' I am conſcious that I e wronged them? Hath it ſuch a beauty in my , while I am the object of it? Why then ſhould e a hard and grievous burden to me to love o-rs, though they have wronged me, and deſerve o more than I did? Why hath it not the ſame iable aſpect, when my brother is the object of it? rtainly no reaſon for it, but becauſe I am yet car-, and have not that fundamental law of nature yet inctly written again upon my heart, *what ye would thers ſhould do to you, do it to them*, Matth. 12. If I be convinced that there is any equity beauty in that command, which charges others love me, forgive me, and forbear me, and reſtore in meekneſs; why then ſhould it be a grievous mand that I ſhould pay that debt of love and tender-

tenderneſs to others? 1 John v. 3. "For this is
"love of God, that we keep his commandmen
"and his commandments are not grievous."

IN the *third* place, conſider to whom this aff
tion ſhould be extended; more generally to
men, as fellow-creatures: But particularly a
eſpecially to all who are begotten of God, as fello
chriſtians. "And this commandment have we fr
"him, that he who loveth God, love his brot
"alſo. Whoſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chri
"is born of God, and every one that loveth hi
"that begat, loveth him alſo that is begotten
"him, 1 *John* iv. 21. and *Chap.* v. 1. As we ha
"therefore opportunity; let us do good unto
"men, eſpecially unto them who are of the ho
"hold of faith, *Gal.* vi. 10. O my ſoul, thou h
"ſaid unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord;
"goodneſs extendeth not to thee: But unto t
"ſaints that are in the earth, and to the excell
"in whom is all my delight." *Pſal.* xvi. 2, 3. A
this conſideration the holy Ghoſt ſuggeſts to ma
us maintain love and unity. Love towards th
runs in a purer channel, "Ye have purified yo
"ſouls in obeying the truth through the Spirit,
"to the unfeigned love of the brethren; ſee th
"ye love one another, with a pure heart fervent
"being born again, not of corruptible ſeed, but
"incorruptible, by the word of God which live
"and abideth for ever," 1 *Pet.* i. 22, 23. To be b
gotten of one Father, and that by a divine birth, th
they have ſuch a high deſcent and royal generatio
there are ſo many other bonds of unity betwe
us, it is abſurd that this one more ſhould not jo
all: "One Lord, one faith, one baptiſm, one bo
"one ſpirit, called to one hope, one God and
"ther of all," *Eph.* iv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. All theſe be
on

it is ſtrange if we be not one in love. If ſo many ions beget not a ſtrong and warm affection, re *worſe than infidels*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, m. v 8. *If a man care not for his own houſe*, roldly intereſts, *he is worſe than an infidel*; they have a natural affection. Sure then this excellent nature, *a divine nature* we are par- s of, cannot want affection ſuitable to its na- . Chriſtianity is a fraternity, a brotherhood, ſhould overpower all relations, bring down of high degree, and exalt him of low degree: ould level all ranks, in this one reſpect, unto the of charity and love. In Chriſt there is nei her nor *Gentile*, there all differences of tongues nations are drowned in this intereſt of Chriſt. iii. 11. *Thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe prudent, and revealed them unto babes*, Luke 21. And *God hath choſen the weak and fooliſh to found the mighty and wiſe*, 1 Cor. i. 27. Behold theſe outward privileges buried in the depths and s of God's grace and mercy. Are we not all ed to one high calling? Our common ſtation is war under Chriſt's banner againſt ſin and Satan: hy then do we leave our ſtation, forget our cal- s, and neglect that employment which concerns all; and fall at odds with our fellow-ſoldiers, bite and devour one another? Doth not this advantage to our common enemies? While conſume the edge of our zeal and ſtrength of our s one upon another, they muſt needs be blunt- nd weakned towards our deadly enemies. If brother be repreſented unto us under the co- ing of many faults, failings, and obſtinacy in his rs or ſuch like: If we can behold nothing but s on his outſide, while we judge after ſome out- d appearance, then, I ſay, we ought to conſider again under another notion and relation, as he

ſtands in Chriſt's account; as he is radically
virtually of that ſeed, which hath more real w
in it than all worldly privileges and dignities. C
ſider him as he once ſhall be, when mortality ſ
be put off; learn to ſtrip him naked of all infir
ties in thy conſideration, and imagine him t
clothed with immortality and glory; and th
how thou wouldeſt then love him. If either t
unclothe him of his infirmities, and conſi
him as veſted now with the robe of Chriſt's rig
ouſneſs, and *all glorious within*, or adorned w
immortality and incorruption a little hence;
elſe, if thou clothe thyſelf with ſuch infirmitie
thou ſeeſt in him, and conſider that thou art
leſs ſubject to failing, and *compaſſed with infir
ty*: Then thou ſhalt put on, and keep on, t
bond of perfection, charity.

LASTLY, Let us conſider the excellent nat
of charity; and how it is intereſted in, a
interwoven with all the royal and divine gifts a
privileges of a Chriſtian; all of them are not aſha
ed of kindred and cognation with charity. Is
the calling and profeſſion of a Chriſtian honourab
Sure to any believing ſoul it is above a monarch
for it includes an anointing both to a royal a
prieſtly office, and carries a title to a kingdom
corruptible and undefiled. Well then, charity is
ſymbol and badge of this profeſſion, John xiii.
*By this ſhall all men know that ye are my diſcipl
if ye have love one to another.* Then, what is co
parable to communion with God, and dwelling
him? *Shall God indeed dwell with men?* ſaid S
mon; that exalts the ſoul to a royalty, and elev
it above mortality: *Quam contempta res eſt hom
ſupra humana ſe non exerat;* how baſe and c
temptible a thing is man, except he lift up his h
ab

ve human things to heavenly and divine? And is the ſoul truly magnified while it is aſcend- up to its own element, *a divine nature.* What e gracious than this, for a ſoul to *dwell in God?* what more glorious than this, God to dwell he ſoul? *Charitas te domum Domini facit, & num domum tibi; felix artifex charitas quae ori ſuo domum fabricare poteſt*; Love makes ſoul a houſe for the Lord, and makes the Lord uſe to the ſoul; happy artificer that can build uſe for its maſter: Love bringeth him, who is *ebiſt among ten thouſand*, into the chambers of heart, it *lays him all night between its breaſts;* is ſtill emptying itſelf of all *ſuperfluity of naugh-ſs*, and purging out all vanity and filthineſs, there may be more room for his Majeſty. And *love dwells in God*, in his love and grace, in goodneſs and greatneſs, the ſecret of his pre- it delights in: Now this mutual inhabitation, which it is hard to ſay, whether the Majeſty of does moſt deſcend, or the ſoul moſt aſcend, ther he be more humbled or it exalted; this therly love, I ſay, is the evidence and aſſurance . "If we love one another, God dwells in us, nd his love is perfected in us; God is love, and e that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him," 1 *John* iv. 12, 16. For the love of image of God in his children, is indeed the love God whoſe image it is, and then is the *love of perfected*, when it reacheth and extends from to all that is God's, to all that hath intereſt God: His commandments, 1 *John* v. 3. "This the love of God, that we keep his command- ments, and his commandments are not grievous." ohn iv. 21. "And this commandment have we om him, that he who loveth God love his bro- her alſo:" His children, 1 *John* v. 1. "Who-

" ſoever believeth that Jeſus is the Chriſt, is b
" of God, and every one that loveth him that
" gat, loveth him that is begotten of him:"
creatures, *Mal.* ii. 10. " Hath not one God crea
" us, why do we deal treacherouſly every man
" gainſt his brother?" The love of God being
formal, the ſpecial motive of love to our b
thren, it elevates the nature of it, and make
divine love; he that hath true Chriſtian love, d
not only love and compaſſionate his brother, eit
becauſe of its own inclination towards him, or
miſery and neceſſity, or his goodneſs and excell
cy; theſe motives and grounds do not tranſce
mere morality, and ſo cannot beget a love wh
is the ſymptom of Chriſtianity; if there be no
ther motives than theſe, we do not love ſo mu
for God as for ourſelves; for compaſſion intere
ing itſelf with another man's miſery, finds a ki
of relief in relieving it. Therefore the will and go
pleaſure of God muſt be the rule of this moti
and the love of God muſt begin in it and contin
it. And truly charity is nothing elſe but divine lo
in a ſtate of condeſcent, ſo to ſpeak, or the love
a ſoul to God manifeſted in the fleſh; it is th
love moving in a circle from God towards his cr
tures, and unto God again; as his love to the cr
tures begins in himſelf and ends in himſelf, 1 *Jo*
iii. 17. Is it not a high thing to know God aright
" This is life eternal to know thee, the only tr
" God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt ſen
John xvii. 3. That's a high note of excellency p
on it, this makes the face of the ſoul to ſhine; no
brotherly love evinceth this, that we know Go
" Beloved, let us love one another: for love is
" God; and every one that loveth is born of Go
" and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knowe
" not God; for God is love," 1 *John* iv. 7,

Lo

ve is real light, light and life, light and heat th. "When your fathers did execute judgment, nd relieve the oppreſſed, &c. was not this to know me? ſaith the Lord," *Jer.* xxii. 15, 16. he practice of the moſt common things, out of love of God, and reſpect to his commands, is re real and true religion than the moſt profound abſtracted ſpeculations of knowledge; then ly is God known, when knowledge ſtamps the art with fear and reverence of his Majeſty and ve to his name; becauſe then he is only known he is a true and living God.

Love is real light and life. "Is it not a pleaſant thing for the eye to behold the ſun? Light is ſweet, and life is precious:" Theſe are two of rareſt jewels given to men. Now "he that ſaith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkneſs even until now, and knoweth not whither he goeth; becauſe darkneſs hath blinded his eyes: but he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occaſion of ſtumbling in him, 1 *John* ii. 9, 10, 11. We know that we have paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren: he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death." 1 *John* iii. 14. The ght of Jeſus Chriſt cannot ſhine into the heart but gets love, even as intenſe light begets heat: and here this impreſſion is not made on the heart, it an evidence that the beams of that Sun of righouſneſs have not pierced it. O! how ſuitable is it a child of light to walk in love? And wherere is it made day-light to the ſoul, but that it may e up and go forth to labour, and exerciſe itſelf *the works of the day*, duties of love to God and en? Now in ſuch a ſoul there is no cauſe of mbling, no ſcandal, no offence in its way to fall er; when the light and knowledge of Chriſt

poſſeſſes the heart in love, there is no ſtumbli
block of tranſgreſſion in its way: It doth not
and ſtumble at the commandments of righteouſ
and mercy as grievous, *therefore love is the fu
ling of the law*, Rom. xiii. 10. And ſo the way
charity is the moſt eaſy, plain, expedient and
way; in this way there is light ſhining all along
and there is no ſtumbling-block in it: For the l
of God and of our brethren hath poliſhed and m
it all plain, hath taken away the aſperities and
mours of our affections and luſts, *complanavit
fectus. Great peace have all they that love thy
and nothing ſhall offend them.* Love makes a
quable and conſtant motion, it moves ſwiftly
ſweetly; it can looſe many knots without diffic
which other more violent principles cannot cut
can melt away mountains before it, which can
be hurled away. Albeit there be many ſtumbli
blocks without in the world, yet there is non
charity, or in a charitable ſoul: None can e
into that ſoul to hinder it to poſſeſs itſelf in m
neſs and patience; nothing can diſcompoſe it w
in, or hinder it to live peaceably with others;
all mens hands be againſt it, yet charity is ag
none, it defends itſelf with innocence and patie
On the other hand, *He that hateth his brother
darkneſs even till now*: For if Chriſt's light
entred, then the love of Chriſt had come wit
and that is the law of love and charity. If J
Chriſt had come into the ſoul, he had reſtored
antient commandment of love, and made it
again: As much of the want of love and cha
as much of the old ignorance and darkneſs rema
Whatſoever a man may fancy of himſelf, tha
is in the light, that he is ſo much advanced in
light: Yet certainly this is a ſtronger evidenc
remaining darkneſs; for it is a work of the dar
darkn

darkneſs, and murdering affection, ſuitable only for the night of darkneſs. And ſuch a man he *knows not whither he goes*, and muſt needs incur and fall upon many ſtumbling-blocks within and without: it is want of love and charity that blinds the mind, and darkens the heart, that it cannot ſee how to eſchew and paſs by ſcandals in others, but it muſt needs daſh and break its neck upon them. Love is a light which may lead us by offences inoffenſively, and without ſtumbling. In darkneſs men miſtake the way, know not the end of it, take pits for plain ways, and ſtumble in them; uncharitableneſs caſts a miſt over the actions and courſes of others, and of our own too, that we cannot carry on either without tranſgreſſion: And this is the miſery of it, that it cannot diſcern any fault in itſelf, it *knows not whither it goeth*, calls light darkneſs and darkneſs light; it is partial in judgment, pronounces always on its own behalf, cares not whomit condemn, ſo that it may abſolve itſelf.

Is there any privilege ſo precious as this, to be *the ſons of God?* 1 John iii. 2. What are all relations, or ſtates, or conditions, to this one, to be the children of the Higheſt? It was *David's* queſtion, *Should I be the king's ſon-in-law?* Alas! what a petty and poor dignity in regard of this, to be *the ſons of God, partakers of a divine nature?* All the difference of birth, all the diſtinction of degrees and qualities amongſt perſons, beſides this one, are but ſuch as have no being, no worth but in the fancy and conſtruction of them, they really are nothing and can do nothing; this only is a ſubſtantial and fundamental difference: A divine birth carries along with it a divine nature; a change of principles, from the worſt to the beſt, from darkneſs to light, from death to life. Now imagine then what excellency is in this grace; which is made the character of a ſon

of God, of one begotten of the Father, and
from death to life? 1 *John* iii. 10,14. " In this
" children of God are manifeſt, and the child
" of the devil: Whoſoever doth not righte
" neſs, is not of God, neither he that loveth
" his brother, We know that we have paſſed fr
" death unto life, becauſe we love the brethre
" he that loveth not his brother, abideth in dea
" 1 *John* iv. 7. Beloved, let us love one anoth
" for love is of God; and every one that love
" is born of God, and knoweth God." And tr
it is moſt natural, if it be ſo, that the children
our Father love other dearly; it is monſtrous a
unnatural to ſee it otherwiſe. But beſides, there
in this a great deal of reſemblance of their Fath
whoſe eminent and ſignal property it is, *to be g*
to all, and kind even to the unthankful; and wh
incomparable glory it is to *pardon iniquity*, a
ſuffer long patiently: A Chriſtian cannot reſemb
his Father more nearly than in this. Why do
account that baſeneſs in us which is glory to Go
Are we aſhamed of our birth, or dare we not o
our Father? Shall we be aſhamed to love them
brethren, whom he hath not been aſhamed to
dopt as ſons, and whom Chriſt is not aſhamed
call brethren?

CHAP. IV.

WE ſhall not be curious in the ranking of t
duties in which Chriſtian love ſhould exe
ciſe itſelf: All the commandments of the ſeco
table are but branches of it, they might be reduc
all to the works of righteouſneſs and of mercy. B
truly theſe are interwoven through other: Thou
mercy uſes to be reſtricted to the ſhewing of co
paſſi

passion upon men in misery, yet there is a righteousness in that mercy; and there is mercy in the most part of the acts of righteousness, as in not judging rashly, in forgiving, &c. therefore we shall consider the most eminent and difficult duties of love, which the word of God solemnly and frequently charges upon us in relation to others, especially these of the household of faith.

I conceive we would labour to inforce upon our hearts, and persuade our souls to a love of all men, by often ruminating upon the words of the Apostle, which enjoin us to *abound in love towards all men*, 1 Thess. iii. 12. and this is so concerning, that he prays earnestly that the Lord would *make them increase* in it, and this we should pray for too. An affectionate disposition towards our common nature is not a common thing; Christianity enjoins it, and it is only true humanity, *Luke* vi. 36, 37. "Be "ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is mer-"ciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: "condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: "forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:" Now in relation to *all men*, charity hath an engagement upon it to pray for all sorts of men, from that Apostolick command, 1 *Tim.* ii. 1. "I exhort therefore, that "first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, "and giving of thanks be made for all men:" Prayers and supplications, earnest prayers out of affection, should be poured out even for them that cannot, or do not pray for themselves: Wherefore are we taught to pray, but that we may be the mouth of others? And since an intercessor is given to us above, how are we bound to be intercessors for others below; and so to be affected with the common mercies of the multitude, as to give thanks too? If man, by the law of creation, is the mouth of the stones, trees, birds, beasts, of heaven and earth,

earth, ſun and moon and ſtars; how much mo ought a Chriſtian, a redeemed man, be the mou of mankind to praiſe God for the abounding of h goodneſs, even towards theſe who are left yet in th miſery and bondage that he is delivered from?

Next, charity by all means will avoid ſcanda and live honeſtly in the ſight of all men; *give no offence, neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, n to the church of God*, 1 Cor. x. 32. And he ad his own example, *even as I pleaſe all men in a things, not ſeeking my own profit, but the profit many, that they may be ſaved*, ver. 33. Charity not ſelf-addicted, it hath no humour to pleaſe, can diſpleaſe itſelf to profit others. I do verily thin there is no point of Chriſtianity leſs regarded: O thers we acknowledge, but we fail in practice, thi ſcarce hath the approbation of the mind, few d conceive an obligation lying on them to it. But O how is Chriſtianity, the moſt of it, humanity Chriſt makes us men as well as Chriſtians, he make us reaſonable men when believers. Sin transforme our nature into a wild, beaſtly, viperous, ſelfy thing Grace reſtores reaſon and natural affection in th pureſt and higheſt ſtrain. And this is reaſon an humanity, elevated and purified, to condeſcend t all men in all things for their profit and edification to deny itſelf to ſave others: Whatſoever is no neceſſary in itſelf, we ought not to impoſe a neceſ- ſity upon it by our imagination and fancy, to the prejudice of a greater neceſſity, another's edification. Indeed charity will not, dare not ſin to pleaſe men; that were to hate God, to hate ourſelves, and to hate our brethren under a baſe pretended notion of love: But I believe, addictedneſs to our own humours in things not neceſſary, which have no worth but from our diſpoſition, doth oftner tranſport us beyond the bounds of charity than the apprehenſion of

duty

duty and conſcience of ſin. Some will grant they ſhould be tender of offending the ſaints; but they do not conceive it is much matter what they do in relation to others, as if it were lawful to murder a Gentile more than a Chriſtian: That is a bloody imagination, oppoſite to that innocent Chriſtian Paul, Philip. ii. 15. we *ſhould be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God, without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, among whom we ſhould ſhine as lights:* And truly it is humanity elevated by Chriſtianity, or reaſon purified by religion, that is the light that ſhines moſt brightly in this dark world: And that in the Col. iv. 5. *Walk in wiſdom toward them that are without*: And 1 Theſſ. iv. 12. *Walk honeſtly toward them that are without*; avoiding all things, in our profeſſion and carriage, which may alienate them from the love of the truth and godlineſs: Walking ſo, as we may inſinuate into their hearts ſome apprehenſion of the beauty of religion. Many conceive, if they do good all is well, if it be a duty it matters nothing: But remember that caution, *Let not then your good be evil ſpoken of*, Rom. xiv. 16. We would have our eyes upon that too, ſo to circumſtantiate all our duties, as they may have leaſt offence in them, and be expoſed to leaſt obloquy of men, 1 Pet. ii. 12. *Having your converſation honeſt among the Gentiles: That whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil-doers, they may by your good works which they ſhall behold, glorify God in the day of viſitation.*

Then *Thirdly*, Charity *follows peace with all men*, as much as is poſſible, Heb. xii. 14. *If it be poſſible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men*, Rom. xii. 18. Many ſpirits are framed for contention; if peace follow them, they will flee from it: But a Chriſtian having made peace with God, the ſweet fruit of that upon his ſpirit, is

to diſpoſe him to a peaceable and quiet condeſce
dency to others; and if peace flee from him,
follow after it, not only to entertain it when it
offered, but to ſeek it when it is away, and to pu
ſue it when it runs away. Pſal. xxxiv. 14. whic
Peter urges upon Chriſtians, 1 Pet. iii. 8, 9, 10, 1
*Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compaſſi
one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be cou
teous: Not rendring evil for evil, or railing f
railing: But contrariwiſe, bleſſing; knowing th
ye are thereunto called, that ye ſhould inherit a ble
ſing. For he that will love life, and ſee good day
let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lip
that they ſpeak no guile. Let him eſchew evil, an
do good: let him ſeek peace, and enſue it.* I think
ſince we obtained the mercy to get a Peace-make
between us and God, we ſhould henceforth coun
ourſelves bound to be peace-makers among men. An
truly ſuch have a bleſſing pronounced upon them
Mat. v. 9. *Bleſſed are the peace-makers*, the *Princ
of peace* pronounced it, and this is the bleſſedneſs
they ſhall be called the children of God: Becauſe h
is *the God of peace*; and to reſemble him in theſe
firſt in purity, then in peace, is a character of hi
image. It is true, peace will ſometimes flee ſo faſt
and ſo far away, as a Chriſtian cannot follow i
without ſin, and that is breach of a higher peace
But charity when it cannot live in peace without
it doth then live in peace within; becauſe it hath
that ſweet teſtimony of conſcience, that, as far a
did ly in it, peace was followed without. Divine
wiſdom, James iii. 17. " is firſt pure, then peace-
" able, gentle, eaſy to be entreated, full of mercy
" and good fruits, without wrangling, and with-
" out hypocriſy." If wiſdom be peaceable and not
pure, it is but a carnal conſpiracy in iniquity, earth-
ly and ſenſual: But if it be pure, it muſt be peace-
able;

able; for the wiſdom deſcending from above, it hath a purity of truth, and a purity of love, and a purity of the mind and of the affection too. Where there is a purity of truth, but accompanied with envying, bitter ſtrife, rigid judging, wrangling, and ſuch like; then it is defiled and corrupted by the intermixture of vile and baſe affections, aſcending out of the dunghill of the fleſh: The vapours of our luſts ariſing up to the mind, do incraſſate pure truth, they put an earthly, ſenſual and deviliſh priſage on it.

Charity its converſation and diſcourſe is without judging, without cenſuring, *Matth.* vii. 1. Of which chapter, becauſe it contains much edification, I ſhall ſpeak more hereafter. James iii. 17. *Without partiality, without hypocriſy.* The words in the original are, αδιακριτος και ανυποκριτος, without judging and wrangling; and *without hypocriſy*; importing, that great cenſurers are often the greateſt hypocrites, and ſincerity has always much charity. Truly there is much idle time ſpent this way in diſcourſes of one another, and venting our judgments of others: As if it were enough of commendation for us to condemn others; and much piety to charge another with impiety: We would even be ſparing in *judging them that are without*; 1 Cor. v. 12, 13. Reflecting upon them or their ways, hath more provocation than edification in it: A cenſorious humour is certainly moſt partial to itſelf, and ſelf-indulgent; it can ſooner endure a great *beam in its own eye*, than a little *mote in its neighbour's*; and this ſhews evidently that it is not the hatred of ſin, or the love of virtue, which is the ſingle and ſimple principle of it; but ſelf-love, ſhrouded under the vail of diſpleaſure at ſin, and delight in virtue. I would think one great help to amend this, were to abate much from the ſuperfluity and multitude of

diſcour-

diſcourſes upon others; *in the multitude of wor* *there wants not ſin*, and in the multitude of di courſes upon other men, there cannot miſs the ſi of raſh judging. I find the ſaints and *fearers of G* commended for *ſpeaking often one to another*, but n at all for ſpeaking one of another: The ſubject their diſcourſe, *Mal.* iii. 16. certainly was of an ther ſtrain, how good it was to ſerve the Lord, & oppoſite to the evil communication of others ther regiſtred.

Charity is no tale-bearer; *it goeth not about as* ſlanderer *to reveal a ſecret*, though true, Prov. xx 19. *It is of a faithful ſpirit to conceal the matter* Prov. xi. 13. Another man's good name is as pledge laid down in our hand, which every ma would faithfully reſtore, and take heed how he loſ it, or alienate it by backbiting. Some would hav nothing to ſay, if they had not others faults an frailties to declaim upon: But it were better tha ſuch kept always ſilent, that either they had no ear to hear of them, or know them, or had no tongue to vent them. If they do not lie groſly in it, the think they do no wrong: But let them judge it i reference to themſelves, "A good name is bette "than precious ointment," Eccleſ. vii. 1. and ra- "ther to be choſen than great riches." Prov. xxii 1. And is that no wrong, to defile that precious ointment, and to rob or ſteal away that jewel more precious than *great riches?* There is a ſtrange connection between theſe; "Thou ſhalt not go up "and down as a tale-bearer, nor ſtand againſt the "blood of thy neighbour," Lev. xix. 16. It is a kind of murder, becauſe it kills that which is as precious as life to an ingenuous heart: "The words "of a tale-bearer are as wounds, and they go down "to the innermoſt parts of the belly," Prov. xviii. 8. and xxvi. 22. They ſtrike a wound to any man's

heart

heart, that can hardly be cured; and there is nothing that is ſuch a ſeminary of contention and ſtrife among brethren as this: It is the oil to feed the flame of alienation, *Take away a tale-bearer, and ſtrife ceaſeth*, Prov. xxvi. 20. Let there be but any (and there want not ſuch who have no other trade or occupation) to *whiſper* into the ears of brethren, and ſuggeſt evil apprehenſions of them, they will *ſeparate chief friends*, as we ſee it in daily experience, Prov. xvi. 28. Revilers are amongſt theſe who are excluded out of the kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10. And therefore, as the holy Ghoſt gives general precepts for the profitable and edifying improvement of the tongue, that ſo it may indeed be the glory of a man: (which truly is no ſmall point of religion, as *James* expreſſes, *Chap.* iii. 2. "If any man offend not in word, the ſame is a perfect man") So that ſame Spirit gives us particlur directions about this, "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that ſpeaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, ſpeaks evil of the law, and judges the law," James iv. 11. becauſe he puts himſelf in the place of the Law-giver, and his own judgment and fancy in the room of the law, and ſo judges the law; and therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* makes a wiſe and ſignificant connection, 1 Pet. ii. 1. "Laying aſide all malice, and all guile, and hypocriſies, and envies, and all evil-ſpeakings." Truly evil-ſpeaking of our brethren, tho' it may be true, yet it proceeds out of the abundance of theſe in the heart, of guile, hypocriſy and envy. While we catch at a name of piety from cenſuring others, and build our own eſtimation upon the ruins of another's good name; hypocriſy and envy are too predominant. If we would indeed grow in grace by the word, and *taſte* more *how gracious the Lord* is, we muſt lay theſe aſide, and become as little children,

children, without guile, and without gall. Many account it excuſe enough, that they did not invent evil tales, or were not the firſt broachers of them; but the ſcripture joins both together, the man that "ſhall abide in his tabernacle" muſt neither vent nor invent them, neither caſt them down nor take them up, "He backbiteth not with his tongue, "nor taketh up a reproach againſt his neighbour;" Pſal. xv. 3. or receives not, or endures not, as in the margin; he neither gives it nor receives he it. Hath not a tongue to ſpeak of others faults, nor an ear to hear them; indeed he hath a tongue to confeſs his own, and an ear open to hear another confeſs his faults, according to that precept, "Confeſs "your faults one to another." We are forbidden to have much ſociety or fellowſhip with *tale-bearers*; and it is added, Prov. xx. 19. "And meddle "not with ſuch as flatter with their mouth:" As indeed commonly they who reproach the abſent flatter the preſent; a backbiter is a face-flatterer, and therefore we ſhould not only not meddle with them, but drive them away as enemies to human ſociety. Charity would in ſuch a caſe protect itſelf, if I may ſo ſay, *by an angry countenance*, an appearance of anger and real diſlike; as *the north-wind drives away rain*, ſo that entertainment would *drive away a backbiting tongue*, Prov. xxv. 23. If we do diſcountenance it, backbiters will be diſcouraged to open their pack of news and reports; and indeed the receiving readily of evil reports of brethren, is a "partaking with the unfruitful works "of darkneſs, which we ſhould rather reprove," Eph. v. 11. To join with the teller is to complete the evil report; for if there were no receiver there would be no teller, no tale-bearer. "Charity co-"vers a multitude of ſins," 1 Pet. iv. 8. and therefore "above all things have fervent charity

"among

mong yourſelves," ſays he. What is above
r and *watching unto the end, above ſobriety?*
ed in reference to fellowſhip with God theſe
bove all; but in relation to comfortable fellow-
one with another in this world, this is above
and the crown or cream of other graces. He
ſe ſins are covered by God's free love, cannot
k it hard to ſpread the garment of his love over
brother's ſins. *Hatred ſtirreth up ſtrife*, all un-
itable affections, as envy, wrath: it ſtirreth up
entions, and blazeth abroad mens infirmities:
love covereth all ſins, concealeth them from
o whom the knowledge of them doth not be-
, Prov. x. 12. Love in a manner ſuffers not
to know what it knoweth, or at leaſt to re-
mber it much; it will ſometimes hoodwink itſelf
favourable conſtruction; it will paſs by an in-
ity, and miſken it, but many ſtand ſtill and
mmune with it; but he that covereth a tranſ-
ſion ſeeks love to bury offences in. Silence is a
ble mean to preſerve concord, and beget true
y and friendſhip. The keeping of faults long
ve ground unburied, doth make them caſt forth
an evil ſavour that will ever part friends:
erefore ſays the wiſe man, *He that covereth a*
greſſion ſeeketh love: but he that repeateth a
ter ſeparateth very friends, Prov. xvii. 9. Go-
ing faults chriſtianly, will make a ſtranger a
nd, but repeating and blazing of them, will
e a friend not only a ſtranger, but an enemy.
this is nothing to the prejudice of that Chri-
n duty of reproving and admoniſhing one ano-
, Eph. v. 11. *Have no fellowſhip with the un-*
iful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them:
ve commands to reprove in *the ſpirit of meekneſs*,
. vi. 1. As a man would reſtore an arm out of
t: And therefore thou *ſhalt not hate him in thy*

heart, but *ſhall in any ways reprove him, an*
ſuffer ſin upon him, Lev. xix 17. And he tha
proves his brother after this manner from love,
in meekneſs and wiſdom, *ſhall afterward find*
favour of him than he that flatters with his to
Prov. xxviii. 23. To cover grudges and jealo
in our hearts, were to nouriſh a flame in our
ſom, which doth but wait for a vent, and w
one occaſion or other burſt out: But to look
narrowly to every ſtep, and to write up a reg
of mens mere frailties, eſpecially ſo as to pu
them to the world; that is inconſiſtent with
rule of love. And truly it is a token of one *deſt*
of wiſdom to deſpiſe his neighbour; *but a ma*
underſtanding will hold his peace: He that
moſt defects himſelf, will find manieſt in oth
and ſtrive to vilify them one way or other; b
wiſe man can paſs by frailties, yea, offences
to him, and be ſilent, *Prov.* xi. 12.

CHAP. V.

HUmility is the root of charity, and meek
the fruit of both. There is no ſolid and
ground of love to others, except the rubbiſ
ſelf-love be firſt caſt out of the ſoul; and when
ſuperfluity of naughtineſs is caſt out, then ch
hath a ſolid and deep foundation: *The end of*
command is charity out of a pure heart, 1 Tim.
It is only ſuch a purified heart, cleanſed from
poiſon and contagion of pride and ſelf-eſtima
that can ſend out ſuch a ſweet and wholeſom ſtr
to the refreſhing of the ſpirits and bowels o
church of God. If ſelf-glory and pride have
roots faſtned into the ſoul, they draw all the
and virtue downward, and ſend little or nothin

the tree of charity, which makes it barren and fruitful in the works of righteouſneſs, and fruits mercy and meekneſs: There are obſtructions in way of that communication, which only can removed by the plucking up of theſe roots of and ſelf-eſtimation, which preys upon all, and rporates all in itſelf; and yet, like the lean kine had devoured the fat, are never the fatter or well-favoured.

is no wonder then that theſe are the firſt prin-s that we muſt learn in Chriſt's ſchool, the A B C of Chriſtianity; *learn of me, for I am and lowly in heart, and ye ſhall find reſt unto ſouls*, Matth. xi 29. This is the great Prophet of the Father into the world to teach us, whom ath, with a voice from heaven, commanded hear, *this is my well-beloved Son, hear him.* uld not the fame and report of ſuch a Teacher e us? He was teſtified of very honourably long re he came, that he had the *Spirit above mea-, that he had the tongue of the learned*, Iſa. l. 4. t he was a greater Prophet than *Moſes*, Deut. ii. 15, 18. that is, the *wonderful Counſellor* of ven and earth, Iſa. ix. 6. The *Witneſs to the* , a Teacher and *Leader to the people:* And , when he came, he had the moſt glorious teſti-y from the moſt glorious perſons, the *Father* the *Holy Ghoſt*, in the moſt ſolemn manner ever the world heard of, *Matth.* xvii. 5. *Be-a voice out of the cloud, which ſaid, This is my ed Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him.* , this is our *Maſter*, our *Rabbi*, *Matth.* xxiii. his is the *Apoſtle and High Prieſt of our pro-*, Heb. iii. 1. *The light of the world and life* , John viii. 12. and vi. 33, 51. Having then a Teacher and Maſter, ſent us from heaven, we not glory in our Maſter? But ſome may

ſuppoſe, that he who came down from hea
filled with all the riches and treaſures of heave
wiſdom, ſhould reveal in his ſchool unto his d
ples, all the myſteries and profound ſecrets of
ture and art; about which the world hath pl
ſince the firſt taſte of the tree of knowledge,
beaten out their brains to the vexation of all t
ſpirits, without any fruit, but the diſcovery of
impoſſibility of knowing, and the increaſe of ſor
by ſearching: Who would not expect, when
Wiſdom of God deſcends among men, but tha
ſhould ſhew unto the world that wiſdom in
underſtanding of all the works of God, which
men have been purſuing in vain; that he by wh
all things were created, and ſo could unbowel
manifeſt all their hidden cauſes and virtues, all t
admirable and wonderful qualities and operati
as eaſily by a word, as he made them by a wo
who would not expect, I ſay, but that he ſho
have made this world, and the myſteries of it,
ſubject of all his leſſons, the more to illuſtrate
own glorious power and wiſdom? And yet beh
they who had come into his ſchool and heard
Maſter and Doctor teach his ſcholars, they who
been invited to come, through the fame and rep
of his name, would have ſtood aſtoniſhed and
prized to hear the ſubject of his doctrine; one co
from on high to teach ſo low things as theſe, *Le
of me, I am meek and lowly.* Other men tha
maſters of profeſſions, and authors of ſects or
ders, do aſpire unto ſome ſingularity in doctrine
make them famous. But behold our Lord and M
ſter, this is the doctrine he vents, it hath noth
in it that ſounds high, and looks big in the eſti
tion of the world: In regard of the wiſdom of
world it is fooliſhneſs, a doctrine of humility fr
the moſt High! a leſſon of lowlineſs and meekn
fr

m the Lord and Maker of all! There ſeems, at
l, nothing in it to allure any to follow it. Who
uld travel ſo far as the College of Chriſtianity to
rn no more but this, when every man pretends
be a teacher of it?

But truly there is a majeſty in this lowlineſs, and
re is a ſingularity in this commoneſs. If ye would
y and hear a little longer, and enter into a deep
rch of this doctrine, we would be ſurcharged and
ercome with wonders. It ſeems ſhallow tillye enter,
t it has no bottom: Chriſtianity makes no great
ſe, but it runs the deeper: It is a light and overly
owledge of it, a ſmall ſmattering of the doctrine
it, that makes men deſpiſe it, and prefer other
ngs; but the deep and ſolid apprehenſion of it
l make us adore and admire, and drive us to an,
altitudo! "O the depth both of the wiſdom and
knowlede of God!" *Rom.* xi. 33. As the ſuper-
ial knowledge of nature makes men atheiſts, but
profound underſtanding of it makes men pious:
all other things, *vileſcunt ſcientia*, grow more
ntemptible by the knowledge of them; it is ig-
rance of them which is the mother of that devout
miration we bear to them, but Chriſtianity only
leſcit ignorantia clareſcit ſcientia, it is common
d baſe, becauſe not known; and that is no diſ-
ragement at all unto it, that there is none de-
ſes it, but he that knoweth it not, and none can
any thing, but deſpiſe all beſides it that once
ows it; that is the proper excellency and glory
it.

All arts and ſciences have their principles, and
mmon axioms of unqueſtionable authority, all
d of profeſſions have ſome fundamental doctrines
d points which are the character of them; Chri-
nity hath its principles too; and principles muſt
plain and uncontroverted, they muſt be evident

by their own light, and apt to give light to ot
things; all the reſt of the concluſions of the art
but derivations and deductions from them. C
Maſter and Doctor follows the ſame method,
lays down ſome common principles, ſome fun
mental points of this profeſſion, upon which all
building of Chriſtianity hangs; *Learn of me, fo*
am meek and lowly: This was the high leſſon t
his life preached ſo exemplarily, and his doctr
preſſed ſo earneſtly; and in this he is very unl
other teachers, who impoſe burdens on others, a
themſelves do not ſo much as touch them. But
firſt practiſes his doctrine, and then preaches it;
firſt caſts a pattern in himſelf, and then preſſes
follow it: Examples teach better than rules,
both together are moſt effectual and ſure: T
rareſt Example and nobleſt Rule that ever w
given to men, are here met together.

The rule is about a thing that has a low nam
but a high nature: Lowlineſs and meekneſs in
putation and outward form, they are like ſervan
yet they account it no robbery to be equal with
higheſt and moſt princely graces. The vein of g
and ſilver lies very low in the bowels of the ea
but it is not therefore baſe, but the more precio
Other virtues may come with more obſervation;
theſe, like the Maſter that teaches them, come w
more reality; if they have leſs pomp, they ha
more power and virtue. Humility how ſuitable
it to humanity? They are as near of kin one
another, as *homo & humus*; and therefore, exce
a man caſt off humanity, and forget his origin
the ground, the duſt from whence he was taken
do not ſee how he can ſhake off humility: Se
knowledge is the mother of it, the knowledge
that *humus* would make us *humiles*; look to
hole of the pit from whence thou art hewn; a m
cou

ld not look high that looked ſo low as the pit
m whence we were taken by nature, even the
t; and the pit from whence we are hewn by
ace, even man's loſt and ruined ſtate: Such a
look would make a lowly mind. Therefore
de muſt be nothing elſe but an empty and vain
nour, a puffing up: *Knowledge puffeth up*; not
knowledge, that caſts down, and brings down
ſuperſtructures, razes out all vain confidence to
very foundation, and then begins to build on a
d ground: But knowledge of other things with-
t, joined with ignorance of ourſelves within, is
a ſwelling, not a growing; it is a bladder or ſkin
l of wind, a blaſt or breath of an airy applauſe
commendation, will extend it and fill it full.
d what is this elſe but a monſter in humanity;
ſkin of a man ſtuffed or blown up with wind
d vanity, to the ſhadow and reſemblance of a
n; but no bones or ſinews, nor real ſubſtance
thin? Pride is an excreſcence, it is nature ſwelled
yond the intrinſick terms or limits of magnitude,
ſpirit of a mouſe in a mountain. And now, if
y thing be gone without the juſt bounds of the
gnitude ſet to it, it is imperfect, diſabled in its
erations, vain and unprofitable, yea prodigious
e. If there be not ſo much real excellency as may
l up the circle of our ſelf-eſtimation, then ſurely
muſt be full of emptineſs and vanity; fancy and
agination muſt ſupply the vacant room, where
lid worth cannot extend ſo far. Now, I believe,
any man could but impartially and ſeriouſly re-
ct upon himſelf, he would ſee nothing of that
nd, no true ſolid and real dignity to provoke love;
t real baſeneſs and miſery to procure loathing.
here is a lie in every ſin; but the greateſt and
oſſeſt lie is committed in pride, and attribution
that excellency to ourſelves which is not: And

upon what, erroneous fancy, which is a ſandy an vain foundation, is built the tower of ſelf-eſtim tion, vain gloriation, and ſuch like? Pride, whic is the mother of theſe, ſays moſt preſumptuouſly *By the ſtrength of my hand I have done it, and b my wiſdom; for I am prudent*, Iſa. x. 13. *I am, a none elſe beſides me*, Iſa. xlvii. 10. It is ſuch a fal imagination, *I am of perfect beauty*, I am and non elſe, *I am a god*, Ezek. xxvii. 3. and xxviii. which ſwells and lifts up the heart. Now what vain thing is it, an inordinate elevation of the hea upon a falſe miſapprehenſion of the mind: Th *ſoul which is lifted up, is not upright in him*, Hab ii. 4. It muſt be a tottering building that is founde on ſuch a groſs miſtake.

Some cover their pride with the pretence of hig ſpiritedneſs, and pleaſe themſelves in the apprehen ſions of ſome magnanimity and generoſity: Bu the truth is, it is not true magnitude, but a ſwel ling out of a ſuperabundance of peſtilent humours True greatneſs of ſpirit is inwardly and throughou ſolid, firm from the bottom, and the foundation o it is truth. Which of the two do ye think hath th better ſpirit, he that calls duſt, duſt; and account of dung as dung: Or he that, upon a falſe imagi nation, thinks duſt and dung is gold and ſilver eſteems himſelf a rich man, and raiſes up himſel above others? Humility is only true magnanimity for it digs down low, that it may ſet and eſtabliſh the foundation of true worth: It is true, it is lowly and bows down low; but as the water that come from a height, the lower it come down the highe it aſcends up again; ſo the humble ſpirit, the lowe it fall in its own eſtimation, the higher it is raiſed real worth and in God's eſtimation. *He that humble himſelf, ſhall be exalted, and he that exalts himſel ſhall be abaſed*, Mat. xxiii. 12. He is like a grow

ing

ing tree, the deeper the roots go down in the earth, the higher the tree grows above ground; as *Jacob's* ladder, the foot of it is faſtened in the earth, but the top of it reaches the heavens. And this is the ſure way to aſcend to heaven. Pride would fly up upon its own wings: But the humble man will enter at the loweſt ſtep, and ſo goes up by degrees, and in the end it is made manifeſt: Pride catches a fall, and humility is raiſed on high; it deſcended that it might aſcend. *A man's pride ſhall bring him low, but honour ſhall uphold the humble in ſpirit*, Prov. xxix. 23. *Pride goeth before deſtruction, and an haughty ſpirit before a fall: but before honour is humility*, Prov. xvi. 18. and xviii. 12. The firſt week of creation, as it were, afforded ſome ſignal examples of this wiſe permutation of divine juſtice; angels caſt out of heaven, and man out of paradiſe; a high and wretched aim at wiſdom brought both as low as hell; the pride of angels and men, was but the riſing up to a height, or climbling up a ſteep to the pinacle of glory, that they might catch the lower fall: But the laſt week of the creation, to ſpeak ſo, ſhall afford us rare and eminent demonſtrations of the other; poor wretched and miſerable ſinners lift up to heaven by humility, when angels were thrown down from heaven for pride; what a ſtrange ſight, an angel, once ſo glorious, ſo low; and a ſinner, once ſo wretched and miſerable, ſo high? Truly may any man conclude within himſelf, *Better it is to be of an humble ſpirit with the lowly, than to divide the ſpoil with the proud*, Prov. xvi. 19. Happy lowlineſs that is the foundation of true highneſs: But miſerable highneſs that is the beginning of eternal baſeneſs, "Bleſſed are the poor in "ſpirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," *Mat.* v. 3. Bleſſedneſs begins low in poverty of ſpirit: And Chriſt's ſermon upon bleſſedneſs begins at it,

but

but it ariſes in the end to the riches of a kingdom, a heavenly kingdom. Grace is the ſeed of glory; and poverty of ſpirit is the ſeed, firſt dead before it be quickened to grow up in fruits: And indeed *the grain is not quickened except it die*, 1 Cor. xv. 36. and then it gets a body, *and bringeth forth much fruit*, John xii. 24. Even ſo grace is ſown into the heart, but it is not quickened except it die in humility, and then God gives it a body, when it ſprings up in other beautiful graces, of meekneſs, patience, love, &c. but theſe are never ripe till the day that the ſoul get the warm beams of heaven, being ſeparated from the body, and then is the harveſt a rich crop of bleſſedneſs. Holineſs is the ladder to go up to happineſs by; or rather our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as adorned with all theſe graces: Now theſe are the ſteps of it mentioned *Matth.* v. and the loweſt ſtep that a ſoul firſt aſcends to him by, is poverty of ſpirit, or humility. And truly the ſpirit cannot meet with Jeſus Chriſt, till he firſt bring it down low: Becauſe he hath come ſo low himſelf, as that no ſoul can aſcend up to heaven by him, except they bow down to his lowlineſs, and riſe upon that ſtep.

Now a man being thus humbled in ſpirit before God, and under his mighty hand, he is only fit to obey the apoſtolick precept, be ye all of *you ſubject one to another*, 1 Pet. v. 5. Humility towards men depends upon that poverty and ſelf-emptying *under God's mighty hand*, ver. 6. It is only a lowly heart, that can make the back to bow, and *ſubmit to others* of whatſoever quality, and condeſcend to them of *low degree*; Rom. xii. 16. Eph. v. 21. But the fear of the Lord humbling the ſpirit, will eaſily ſet it as low as any other can put it: This is the only baſis and foundation of Chriſtian ſubmiſſion and moderation. It is not a complemental conde-

ſcendence,

ſcendence, it conſiſts not in an external ſhew of geſture and voice; that is but an apiſh imitation. And indeed pride often will palliate itſelf under voluntary ſhews of humility, and can demit itſelf to undecent and unſeemly ſubmiſſions to perſons far inferior; but it is the more deformed and hateful, that it lurks under ſome ſhadows of humility: As an ape is the more ugly and ill-favoured, that it is liker a man, becauſe it is not a man; ſo vices have more deformity in them, when they put on the garb and vizard of virtue; only it may appear how beautiful a garment true humility is, when pride deſires often to be covered with appearance of it, to hide its nakedneſs: O how rich a clothing is the mean-like garment of humility and poverty of ſpirit! *Be ye clothed with humility*, 1 Pet. v. 5. It is the ornament of all graces; it covers a man's nakedneſs by uncovering of it. If a man had all other endowments, this one *dead fly would make all the ointment unſavoury*, pride: But humility is *condimentum virtutum*, as well as *veſtimentum*; it ſeaſons all graces, and covers all infirmities; garments are for ornament and neceſſity both; truly this clothing is alike fit for both, to adorn and beautify whatſoever is excellent, and to hide or ſupply whatſoever is deficient, *ornamentum & operimentum*.

The Apoſtle *Paul* gives a ſolemn charge to the *Romans*, Rom. xii. 3. "that no man ſhould think "high of himſelf, but ſoberly according to the "meaſure of faith given." That extreme undervaluing and denial of all worth in ourſelves, tho' it be ſuitable before God, *Luke* xvii. 6, 7, 10. *Prov.* xxx. 2, 3. *Job* xlii. 6. 1 *Cor.* iii. 7. Yet it is uncomely and incongruous before men. Humility doth not exclude all knowledge of any excellency in itſelf, or defect in another, it can diſcern; but this is the worth of it, that it thinks ſoberly of the

one,

one, and deſpiſes not the other. The humble man knows any advantage he has beyond another, but he is not *wiſe in his own conceit:* He looks not ſo much upon that ſide of things, his own perfection and others imperfections, that is very dangerous; but he caſts his eye moſt on the other ſide, his own infirmities and others virtues, his worſt part, and their beſt part, and this makes up an equality or proportion. Where there is inequality, there is a different meaſure of gifts and graces, there are diverſe failings and infirmity, and degrees of them; now, how ſhall ſo unequal members make up one body, and join unto one harmonious being, except this proportion be kept, that the defects of one be made up by the humility of another? The difference and inequality is taken away this way, by fixing my eye moſt upon my own diſadvantages and my brother's advantages. If I be higher in any reſpect, yet certainly I am lower in ſome, and therefore the unity of the body may be preſerved by humility. I will conſider in what I come ſhort, and in what another excels, and ſo I can condeſcend to them of low degree. This is the ſubſtance of that which is ſubjoined, Rom. xii. 16. *Mind not high things, but condeſcend to men of low eſtate. Be not wiſe in your own conceits.* And this makes us meet in *honour to prefer one another;* taking ourſelves up in the notion of what evil is in us, and another up in the notion of what good is in him, Rom. xii. 10. *Be kindly affectionate one to another, with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another.* Thus there may be an equality of mutual reſpect and love, where there is an inequality of gifts and graces; there may be one meaſure of charity, where there are different meaſures of faith: Becauſe both neglect that difference, and pitches upon their own evils and another's good.

It

It is our cuſtom to *compare ourſelves among ourſelves*, and the reſult of that ſecret compariſon is eſtimation of ourſelves, and deſpiſing others: We take our meaſure, not by our own real and intrinſick qualifications, but by the ſtature of other mens; and if we find any diſadvantage in others, or any preheminency in ourſelves, in ſuch a partial application and collation of ourſelves with others, (as readily ſelf-love, if it find it not, will fancy it) then we have a tacit gloriation within ourſelves, and a ſecret complacency in ourſelves. But the humble Chriſtian dares not make himſelf of that number, nor *boaſt of things without his meaſure*; he dare not think himſelf good, becauſe, *deterioribus melior*, better than others who are worſe: But he judges himſelf by that intrinſick *meaſure which God hath diſtributed unto him*, and ſo finds reaſon of ſobriety and humility; and therefore he dare not ſtretch *himſelf beyond his meaſure*, or go without his ſtation and degree, 2 Cor. x. 12, 13, 14. Humility makes a man compare himſelf with the beſt, that he may find how bad he himſelf is, but pride meaſures by the worſt, that it may hide from a man his own imperfections. The one takes a perfect rule, and finds itſelf nothing: The other takes a crooked rule, and imagines itſelf ſomething. But this is the way that unity may be kept in the body, if all the members keep this method and order, the loweſt to meaſure by him that is higher, and the higher to judge himſelf by him that is yet above him; and he that is above all the reſt to compare with the rule of perfection, and find himſelf further ſhort of the rule, than the loweſt is below him. If our compariſons did thus aſcend, we would deſcend in humility, and all the different degrees of perſons would meet in one centre of lowlineſs of mind: But while our rule deſcends, our pride aſcends.

aſcends. The ſcripture holds out pride and ſelf-eſtimation as the root of many evils, and humility as the root of many good fruits among men. *Only through pride comes contention*, Prov. xiii. 10. There is pride at leaſt in one of the parties, and often in both; it makes one man careleſs of another, and out of contempt not to ſtudy equity and righteouſneſs towards him; and it makes another man impatient of receiving and bearing an injury or diſreſpect. While every man ſeeks to pleaſe himſelf, the contention ariſes: Pride in both parties makes both ſtiff and inflexible to peace and equity; and in this there is a great deal of folly; for, by this means, both procure more real diſpleaſure and diſſatisfaction to their own ſpirits. *But with the well-adviſed is wiſdom*, they who have diſcretion and judgment will not be ſo wedded to their own conceits, but that in humility they can forbear and forgive for peace ſake. And though this ſeem harſh and bitter at firſt, to a paſſionate and diſtempered mind, yet, O how ſweet is it after! There is a greater ſweetneſs and refreſhment in the peaceable condeſcendence of a man's ſpirit, and in the quiet paſſing by any injury, than the higheſt ſatisfaction that ever revenge or contention gave to any man. *When pride comes, then comes ſhame; but with the lowly is wiſdom*, Prov. xi. 2. Pride growing to maturity and ripeneſs, ſhame is near hand it, almoſt as near as the harveſt; if pride come up, ſhame is in the next rank behind it: But there is a great wiſdom in lowlineſs, that is the honourable ſociety that it walks in. There may be a ſecret connection between this and the former verſe, divers and falſe *balances are abomination to the Lord, but a juſt balance is his delight*. Now, if it be ſo in ſuch low things as merchandiſe, how much more abominable is a falſe ſpiritual balance in the weighing

ing of ourſelves? Pride hath a falſe balance in its hand, the weight of ſelf-love carries down the one ſcale by far.

Lowlineſs of mind is the ſtrongeſt bond of peace and charity; it baniſhes away ſtrife and vain glory, and makes each man to *eſteem another better than himſelf*, Philip. ii. 3. Becauſe the humble man knows his own inſide, and only another's outſide: Now certainly the outſide is always better and more ſpecious than the inſide; and therefore a humble man ſeeing nothing but his neighbour's outſide, and being acquainted throughly with his own inſide, he *eſteems another better than himſelf*. Humility, as it makes a man to think well of another, ſo it hinders him to ſpeak evil of his brother. James iv. 10. He lays down the groundwork in the 10th verſe, "Humble yourſelves in "the ſight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up." He raiſes his ſuperſtructure, verſe 11, 12. "Speak "not evil one of another, brethren. He that ſpeak-"eth evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, "ſpeaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; "but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of "the law, but a judge. There is one Law-giver, "who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy: Who art "thou that judgeſt another?" For truly the very ground of evil-ſpeaking of that nature, is ſome advantage, we conceive, that may redound to our own reputation, by the diminution of another's fame; or, becauſe we are ſo ſhort-ſighted in ourſelves, therefore we are ſharp-ſighted towards others; and becauſe we think little of our own faults, we are ready to aggravate other mens to an extremity. But in ſo doing we take the place of the judge and law upon us, which judges others, and is judged by none: So we judge others, and not ourſelves, neither will we ſuffer ourſelves to be judged by others; this

this is to make ourſelves the infallible rule, to judg
the law.

Humility levels men to a holy ſubjection an
ſubmiſſion to another, without the confuſion
their different degrees and ſtations. It teaches me
to give that reſpect and regard to every one that
due to his place or worth; and to ſignify it in ſuc
a way as may teſtify the ſimplicity of their eſtim
tion, and ſincerity of their reſpect, Eph. v. 2
Submit yourſelves one to another in the fear of Go
1 Pet. v. 5. *All of you be ſubject one to another, an*
be clothed with humility. Now, if humility can pu
a man below others, certainly it will make hi
endure patiently and willingly to be placed in th
ſame rank by others: When others give him th
place to ſit into, that he had choſen for himſel
will he conceive himſelf wronged and affronte
though others about him think ſo? Nay, it is har
to perſuade him of an injury of that kind; becau
the apprehenſion of ſuch an affront hath for its foun
dation the imagination of ſome excellency beyon
others, which lowlineſs hath razed out: He hat
placed himſelf ſo low for every man's edification an
inſtruction, that others can put him no lower; an
there he ſits quietly and peaceably, *bene qui latu*
bene vixit; affronts and injuries fly over him, an
light upon the taller cedars, while the ſhrubs are ſaf

Qui cadit in plano, vix hoc tamen evenit ipſum.
Sic cadit ut tacta ſurgere poſſit humo.

He ſits ſo low, that he cannot fall lower; ſo
humble man's fall upon the ground is no fall i
deed, but in the apprehenſion of others; but it
a heavy and bruiſing fall from off the tower of ſel
conceit.

Now the example that is given us, *learn of m*
is certainly of greater force to perſuade a man t
th

humble compoſed and quiet temper of ſpirit, all the rules in the world: That the Son of ſhould come down and act it before our eyes, caſt us a pattern of humility and meekneſs. his do not prevail to humble the heart, I know what can? Indeed this root of bitterneſs, which in all mens hearts by nature, is very hard to ck up; yea, when other weeds of corruption extirpated, this poiſonable one, pride, grow- the faſter, and roots the deeper. I ſuppoſe, a n ſhould be ſtript naked of all the garments of *old man*, this would be certainly neareſt his , and laſt to put off: It is ſo peſtilent an evil, t it grows in the glaſs-window as well as on the hill; and, which is ſtrange, it can ſpring out the heart, and take moiſture and aliment from ility, as well as from other graces: A man is hazard to wax proud, that he is not proud, and be high-minded, becauſe he is lowly; therefore, is not good to reflect much upon our own graces, more than for a man to eat much honey.

I know not any antidote ſo ſovereign, as the ample of Jeſus Chriſt to cure this evil; and he ſelf often propoſes this receipt to his diſciples, n xiii. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. "Ye call me Maſter and Lord: and ye ſay well; for ſo I am. If I then your Lord and Maſter, have waſhed your feet, ye alſo ought to waſh one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I ſay unto you, the ſervant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is ſent greater than he that ſent him. If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them. *Matth.* xi. 29, 30. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls, for my yoke is eaſy, and my burden is light.

" *Matth.* xx. 27, 28. And whoſoever will be ch
" among you, let him be your ſervant. Even
" the Son of man came not to be miniſtred un
" but to miniſter, and to give his life a ranſom
" many." Might not that ſound always in our e
the ſervant is not above his lord, the Son of man c
not to be miniſtred unto, but to miniſter? O! wh
ſpirit would not that compoſe? What appreh
ſion of wrong would it not compenſate? W
flame of contention about worth and reſpect wo
it not quench? What noiſe of tumultuous paſſi
would it not ſilence? Therefore the Apoſtle of
Gentiles preſcribes this medicine, *Philip.* ii. 5
7, 8. *Let this mind be in you, which was alſo*
Chriſt Jeſus: who being in the form of God, thou
it not robbery to be equal with God; but made h
ſelf of no reputation, and took upon him the form
a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men:
being found in faſhion as a man, he humbled himſ
and became obedient unto death, even the death
the croſs. If he did humble himſelf out of chari
who was ſo high; how ſhould we humble o
ſelves, both out of charity and neceſſity, who
ſo low? If we knew ourſelves, it were no ſtra
thing, that we were humble; the evidence of t
would extort it from us: But here is the wond
that he who knew himſelf to be equal to G
ſhould notwithſtanding become lower than me
that the Lord of all ſhould become the ſervant
all, and the King of glory make himſelf of no
putation: That he pleaſed to come down low
who knew himſelf to be the higheſt of all, no
ceſſity could perſuade it, but charity and love h
done it. Now then, how monſtrous and ugl
thing muſt pride be after this? That the duſt ſho
raiſe itſelf, and a worm ſwell; that wretched
ſerable man ſhould be proud, when it pleaſed
glori

ious God to be humble; that abſolute neceſſity
l not conſtrain to this, that ſimple love perſuad-
him to! How doth this heighten and elevate
mility, that ſuch an One gives out himſelf, not
as the Teacher, but as the pattern of it;
ARN OF ME, for I am meek and lowly in
t, and ye ſhall find reſt unto your ſouls.

SERMON XIV.

Tim i. 5. *Now the end of the Commandment*, &c

FAITH purging the conſcience, and puri-
fying the heart, *works by love:* Love is
fruit of faith; love is the ſtream that flows out
a pure heart and a good conſcience. By love we
an principally love to God, or Jeſus Chriſt, and
n love to the ſaints next to our Saviour: This
often mentioned in ſcripture, *Hope maketh not*
amed, Rom. v. 5. *becauſe the love of God is ſhed*
oad in your hearts by the holy Ghoſt. This love is
conſequent of the peace which a juſtified man
ins by faith, Rom. v. 1, 2. 2 Cor. v. 12. The
ſtraining love of Chriſt flows from this ground,
a man judges Chriſt to have died for him, from
h's taking up of Chriſt in that noble expreſſion
his love, John v. 40, 42. *And ye will not come*
to me, that ye may have life. I know you, that ye
e not the love of God in you. Faith works by
e: Love is faith's hand put out in action for
iſt; and as the mind commands the outward
, whether it will or not, ſo doth faith com-
nd love, *Eph.* iii. 17. The rooting and building
in love is a fruit of Chriſt's dwelling in the
rt by faith; love is the branch that grows in

faith's root, theſe are often joined together, a
comprehend the ſubſtance of the law and goſ
1 *Tim.* i. 14. 2 *Tim.* i. 13. Faith fulfils the obe
ence to the goſpel, and love is the fulfilling of
whole law, *Rom.* xiii. 10. ſo that faith leads a n
back again to the command, that he fled to fa
from, faith hath reconciled them and taken up
difference. We ſhall then ſhew how faith and a g
conſcience, and a pure heart contributes to love

1*ſt*, Faith is the eye and ſenſe of the ſoul to t
up Jeſus Chriſt; nothing is loved but as it is kno
and apprehended to be good. The affections
themſelves are blind, and cannot go forth but as
by the direction of faith; faith is the mind to p
ſent love's object: The world ſees no beauty
form in the commands, that they ſhould de
them; even Jeſus Chriſt himſelf is but fooliſhn
to a natural mind, he neither knows his need
him, nor Chriſt's ſuitableneſs to his need; but fa
is the firſt opening of the eyes, when we are tu
ed from darkneſs to light, and from the power
ſin and Satan unto God, Acts xxvi. 18. Chriſt
comes the believer's wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanc
fication and redemption, 1 Cor. i. 30. "The d
"ſpring from on high viſits them who ſit in da
"neſs, to guide their feet in the way of peac
Luke i. 78, 79. "The light of the knowledge
"the glory of God ſhining in the face of the S
"of righteouſneſs, doth ariſe and ſhine into th
"hearts." The man ſees himſelf in a dangero
condition, and ſays, Oh! where am I? And fai
diſcovers on the other hand, all things in Chr
Jeſus ſuitable to ſuch a caſe. They ſee nothing b
vanity, emptineſs and miſery, ſin and condemna
on in the creature; they ſee grace, mercy, holine
righteouſneſs and free ſalvation in Chriſt: Set the
beſide one another, and judge ye if the ſoul cann
choo

ose to run out in affection and longing desire- ays he, to be one with him; faith presents all motives and attractives of the heart, and then e needs no more to make it love: Faith dis- ers a man's self unto himself, and lets him see misery within, complete wo within doors, and it holds forth bread without the ports for the , and salvation for the lost; it brings in an able person, who is fairer than the children of n, who is all love, and hath no spot in him. it not a sweet word, a Redeemer to captives, a iour to sinners, and will not the soul rise up, go forth out of itself? And will it not choose it unto him who is the desire of all nations? ll it not go unto him for food and clothing? e then is the soul's journey and motion towards , whom faith hath brought in such a good re- t of.

dly. But when faith hath given the answer of a d conscience, and brought Jesus nearer hand to soul, or the soul nearer unto him, then love is nger, and grows like a fire that many waters not quench; it is like jealousy, that is cruel as grave, many floods cannot drown it. Union is ground of love; union in nature or sympathy, likeness is the ground of affection: According faith brings Christ nearer to the heart, the flame reases. All things are desired and loved as good, more desired, as not only good in themselves, good unto us; gold in the *Indies* will not much ve the heart, but bring it hither and ye shall see loves it. The first act of faith puts a man in t need of a Saviour, and discovers a possibility edemption through Jesus, and in so far he is loved; when once faith has gone that length as to e a good conscience, and to calm and silence the s of a troubled mind, by the actual application

of that deſired poſſible redemption, and when it c
particularly apply the common ſalvation, O th
what burning affection! *Who is a God like unto th
who pardoneth iniquity, and paſſes by the tranſgr
ſion of his heritage, becauſe he delights in merc
Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is n
upon earth that I deſire beſides thee? I will love
Lord, becauſe he hath heard my voice, I will c
upon him ſo long as I live*, as if it had never lov
before: They will love much, to whom much
forgiven. Love without ſuch a faith, is full of je
louſies and ſuſpicions; but when faith hath brou
in Chriſt to dwell in the heart, then it is roo
and built up in love, Eph. iii. 17. and then perf
love caſts out fear, 1 John iv. 17. Love before fu
an aſſurance, is but a tormenting love, and ha
much fear in it ſaying, Oh I may want him, a
then I will be more miſerable than if I had n
known him; but faith giving the anſwer of a go
conſcience caſts out horror and fear, and then p
fects love, and the ſoul then cloſes with Chriſt
a Mediator and friend, and cloſes with God a
merciful Father, now reconciled unto him throu
Chriſt, and not any more as a ſtern or ſev
Judge. But,

3*dly*, When faith hath purified the heart, a
cleanſed the affections, then the ſoul burns wit
purer flame of affection and zeal to God, and is
it were delivered from the earthly weight put up
it; when the heart is purified love is like the fla
whereas if he be not ſo purged, there may be ſo
heat and fire latent in the aſhes covered with c
ruption: But a pure heart is a ſpiritual heart, a
minds ſpiritual things, Col. iii. 1. and it is a he
going back unto its own place; Chriſt hath tou
ed it with his own heart, and with his ſalvati
and it looks aye ſure to him in the heavens.

ve of the world is inconſiſtent with the love of e Father, 1 John ii. 15. The love of the world acks the heart downward, and the luſts of the fleſh e ſo many weights upon the believer, that he annot mount up in a ſpiritual cloud of divine af-ction to Jeſus Chriſt; but the pure and ſpiritual eart is now more refined, and delivered from theſe mpediments, and it is like a pure lamp of oil rning upward: When a man's heart is engaged any thing of this world, love cannot be perfect, r love is a man's maſter, and *no man can ſerve o maſters.*

SERMON XV.

Matth. vi. 33. *But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs*, &c.

THIS is a part of Chriſt's long ſermon. He is diſſuading his diſciples and the people, from nal careſulneſs, and worldly-mindedneſs: The rmon holds out the Chriſtian's diverſe aſpects to-ards ſpiritual and external things, what is the hriſtian's diſpoſition in regard to the world, how ſhould look upon food, raiment, and all things eceſſary in this life, *Be careful for nothing, take thought for your life, what ye ſhall eat, or drink*, ſeek them not as your chief good: But what his diſpoſition towards ſpiritual and eternal things, d how ye ought to look upon them, *ſeek them*, your heart upon them, look upon them as your aſure, and *where your treaſure is*, let *your heart be rt alſo*. So then you ſee here two callings and ployments of a man in the world, two univerſal lings that comprehend all men, one natural to and unlawful, the other divine, and lawful, the

one paganiſh, the other Chriſtian: What is employment of all men out of Chriſt? There many different callings and employments amo men, one ſpends his time and thoughts one w and another another way, but all of them agree one general, whatever they are, their heart is he the thoughts they have are bounded and circu ſcribed in this preſent world, they are careful nothing elſe, but what concerns their back a belly, or their name and credit; take the beſt them, whoſe employment ſeems moſt abſtract from the common affairs and diſtractions amo men, yet their affections run no higher than t preſent world. On the other hand, what ſhould the exerciſe and employment of a Chriſtian? I even this, whatever he be, or whatever his oc pation be among men. he drives a higher trade w heaven, that ſhould take him up, the world g but his ſpare hours, he is upon a more noble a high project, he aſpires after a kingdom, his he is above where Chriſt is, and where his treaſure and theſe things exhauſt his affections and pa Chriſt Jeſus once takes the man's heart off th baſer things, that are not worthy of an immor ſpirit, let be a ſpirit who is a partaker of a div nature, but becauſe the creature cannot be ſatisf within itſelf, its happineſs depends upon ſomeh without itſelf, (and this ſpeaks out the vanity the creature, and ſomething of God, that is pecul to him to be ſelf-ſufficient) therefore Chriſt chan the object of the heart, and fixes the ſpirit upo nobler and divine exerciſe, ſince the ſpirit of a m cannot abide within doors without ſtarving, it m run out upon ſomething; therefore Jeſus Ch hath deſcribed its bounds and way, its end a period. Before a man ſought many things, beca not one ſatisfying, that the want of one might

ſuppl

ſupplied by another, and therefore he was never near the borders of contentment and happineſs, becauſe ſtill a thouſand things are wanting; but now Chriſt puts the ſoul upon a ſatisfying and ſelf-ſufficient object, and here the ſtreams of affection may run in one current, and needs not divide or go contrary ways.

1ſt, We have here then the Chriſtian's calling and employment in this world, oppoſed to the carefulneſs, and worldly-mindedneſs of the men of this world, *ſeek ye the kingdom of God.* (2.) His encouragement and ſucceſs in two things, one is expreſſed, the other implied; that which is expreſſed, is ſeeking the kingdom of God, of grace and glory; if ye ſeek this kingdom all temporal things ſhall be laid to your hand, *all theſe things* that ye need *ſhall be added unto you:* the other imported, ye ſhall get the kingdom who ſeek it; for the words *added to you* ſuppoſes the firſt and principal intent to be gotten, then the Chriſtian's ſucceſs and encouragement is this, ye ſhall have the thing ye ſeek and more alſo. It was ſaid to *Solomon, Becauſe thou haſt ſought wiſdom, therefore thou ſhalt get all other things:* Becauſe, O Chriſtian, thou ſought the kingdom of God, and not this preſent world which Satan is prince of, therefore thou ſhalt get according to thy word, and thou ſhalt alſo get what thou aſked not, 1 Kings iii. 11, 12, 13. He hath ſucceſs in the main buſineſs, and there is a ſuperplus beſides, ſome acceſſion to his portion that comes of will (ſo to ſpeak.) The kingdom of God in the New Teſtament is ſometimes reſtricted to the elect, the word of the goſpel, and the adminiſtration of it by the Spirit of grace in the hearts of his people; this is frequently called the kingdom of heaven, and of God, *Matth.* xiii. 33. Sometimes the kingdom of God is taken for the ſtate of grace,

a new

a new principle of ſpiritual life, that grows up to the perfect day, and this kingdom *is within us*, Luke xvii. 21. It is taken alſo for heaven the kingdom of glory, Luke xxii. 16. both theſe muſt be ſought after, Luke xii. 31. and received, Luke xviii. 17. and muſt ſuffer violence, Matth. xi. 12. the righteouſneſs thereof may be taken for the righteouſneſs of God by faith, Rom. x. 3. chap. iii. 21, 22. 2 Cor. v. 21. Rom. iv. 11, 13. Rom. ix. 30. chap. x. 6. Heb. xi. 7. Phil. iii. 9.

We would obſerve here (1.) That the Chriſtian his name and occupation is to be a wanter and a ſeeker. (2.) The great exerciſe and employment he ſhould have in this world, that which ſhould ſwallow up his affections, thoughts and endeavours, ſhould be the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, which is clearly expreſſed in three things. (1.) His firſt and chief care ſhould be to be at peace with God, and to be adorned with Chriſt's righteouſneſs. (2.) To have the kingdom of God within him, a throne of judgment erected for Chriſt to rule the whole man by his Spirit according to the word. (3.) To be made an heir here, and a poſſeſſor hereafter of the everlaſting kingdom of glory. (4.) No man can either be a ſubject of God's gracious kingdom here, or his glorious kingdom hereafter, without the imputed righteouſneſs of the Son of God, and whoever ſeeks righteouſneſs muſt alſo ſeek the kingdom of God; theſe are joined together, and there is a great oppoſition between ſeeking of the world, and ſeeking grace and glory; whoever is careful in theſe things cannot be diligent here, But rather ſeek the kingdom of God Luke xii. 31. alſo implies (5.) That whatever a man be, or his profeſſion be, except he ſeek this way of righteouſneſs, and yield himſelf into God's kingdom of grace, and unleſs Chriſt rule in him, he is but a *pagan* or *infidel*

old Gentile in God's account. We return to the first of these, namely,

1st, That the Christian is a seeker; this is the ordinary description of a child of God, Psal. xxiv, 6. Psal. xxvii, 8. Many at this time call themselves *Seekers*, they profess they seek a true church, and seek ordinances purely dispensed, but find none; but the child of God, the good Christian that seeks according to Christ's appointment, seeks not these things as if they were not, but he seeks God in ordinances, he seeks Christ in the church, he seeks grace and glory, honour and immortality, and eternal life; he is in the church, he hath the ordinances rightly administred, yet he wants the most part till he find Jesus Christ in all these. Many seek corn, wine or any worldly good thing, saying, *Who will shew us any good?* Fie upon such a lax and indifferent spirit, that hath no discretion or sense of things that are good, that sees not one thing needful, and no more good than is necessary. But the child of God is a seeker different from these also, he seeks the favour and countenance of God, Psal. iv, 6, 7. He seeks wisdom above all things, Prov. ii. 4. He seeks but one good thing because there is but one good thing necessary. (2.) The seeking Christian is a wanter, one that hath nothing and finds it so, he wants and knows he wants, else he would never seek. What wants he? nay rather ask, What hath he? It may soon be told what he hath, but it is hard to tell what he wants: Look what he hath, and ye find little or nothing, and therefore ye may may conclude he wants all things. The text tells what he wants, (1.) He wants righteousness. (2.) He wants grace. (3.) He wants glory or hath no right to it. Men seek not what they carry from the womb, therefore all men have come into the world with three great wants. (1.) He want righteous-

ness,

neſs, ye cannot ſtand before God in the terms of ſtrict juſtice, there is nothing ye have or can do, but it is *a menſtruous cloth*, Iſa. lxiv. 6. All your religion and prayers will never commend you to God's holy juſtice; the ſcripture hath paſſed this ſentence upon you all, *There is none righteous, no not one*, Rom. iii. 10. The righteouſneſs that the law of God requires is perfect and complete, and exact; either lay down the whole ſum, for if it want a farthing, it is no payment: Keep all the nine commands, but if ye break the tenth, theſe nine will not ſuffice. Now all of you have ſinned and corrupted your ways, and it is impoſſible to make up the want; as the redemption of the ſoul is precious and ceaſes for ever, ſo the broken and dyvour man having become a bankrupt, ſhall never make up or pay his debt to all eternity: He hath once broken the command, and all your keeping afterwards, will not ſtand for the obedience ye ſhould always have given to it. Therefore ſinners of the poſterity of *Adam*, and wretched men by nature, ſee this great want and impoſſibility to recover it in yourſelves. (2.) Ye likewiſe want all grace by nature; there is no deluſion more ordinary than this that the world thinks grace is very common; but believe it ſirs, that all men came from the womb without grace, get it as ye will: Look what the ſcripture ſpeaks of the whole race of *Adam*, "There is no fear of God before their eyes, *Rom.* "iii. 18. They are without Chriſt, without hope, "and without God in the world, aliens from the "covenants of promiſe," *Eph.* ii. 1, 2, 3, 12. Let grace be as common as can be, yet all of you once wanted it: Ye have it not by birth, nor by education, nor by baptiſm; ye think perhaps a baptized ſoul cannot be graceleſs, but know it for a truth that ye have neither legal righteouſneſs, nor evangelical

gelical holineſs; all of you have wofully fallen from righteouſneſs, and therefore ye ly with *Adam's* poſterity without hope in the world. Grace and truth muſt come from above by Jeſus Chriſt; grace and glory are the gifts of God. (3.) The ſinner alſo comes ſhort of the glory of God, *Rom.* iii. 23. all ſinners are born heirs of hell and wrath, without the hope of happineſs; there is none born with a title to the kingdom of heaven, or any right to it, man in his fall loſt his right to eternal life and immortality, and hath purchaſed a doleful right to the Lord's wrath and to hell-fire. Ye think it ſtrange that any chriſtned or baptized perſon ſhould be damned, but the ſcripture knows no difference, *neither circumciſion nor uncircumciſion availeth any thing, but a new creature, and faith which worketh by love*; neither to be a member of the viſible church, nor a *pagan* avails any thing, for all have ſinned and come ſhort of the glory of God. Now, what have ye ſince ye want righteouſneſs, ye want grace and ye want glory, and in the place of theſe ye have unrighteouſneſs, all ſin, all God's curſes and wrath, and this makes up complete miſery? In a word, ye want God and Chriſt, and this is all and enough for all, Eph. ii. 12. Ye have by nature more ſibneſs with Satan and nearer relation to him, than to God; and if ye want God, what can ye have beſide? Your abundance is want, as *all things are theirs who are Chriſt's*, ſo nothing is theirs who are not God's. In ſhort, there is not in all the creation ſuch a miſerable creature as man, whom God had magnified and exalted above the angels, and the reſt of the works of his hands. Now all men want theſe, but no man knows this but the Chriſtian whoſe eyes Chriſt hath opened, and to whom he hath given eye-ſalve: *Laodicea* was blind and ſaw not, but ſhe thought ſhe was rich enough,

when

when ſhe had nothing, *Rev.* iii. 17, 18. The ma
who will diſcourſe well on all the miſeries of this li
and human infirmities, yet he may be ignorant o
theſe things, there is no man but he knows ſome want
but what is it he miſſes? Nothing but what concern
his preſent being and well-being in this world
and ſo the world may ſupply it; but the Chriſtian
wants ſomething this vain world will not make up
Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is non
upon the earth I deſire beſide thee, ſays the ſoul tha
hath found God, and whom want I in heaven bu
thee? *Pſal.* lxxiii. 25, 26. ſays the ſoul that ſeek
God, he wants God's favour, and the light of hi
reconciled countenance, *Pſal.* iv. 6. If ye aſk him
what ſeek ye, what want ye in all the world? He
anſwers, *And now Lord what wait I for?* my hear
and *my hope is in thee*, Pſal. xxxix. 7. None need-
ed aſk at Mary, *Whom ſeekeſt thou?* any body tha
knows her, knows her want; it is he the Chriſt Je-
ſus, and ſhe thinks all the world ſhould want him
and ſeek him with her, and thinks no body ſhould
be ignorant of him, for ſhe ſpeaks to the gardener
as if there had been no other in the world, *John*
xx. 15. But,

2*dly*. His wants put him to ſeeking, to diligence;
he miſſes ſomething, and O it is a great ſomething
infinitely more than he is worth in the world; he
wants being and well-being, he thinks himſelf as
good as loſt, and he comes at length to ſome point of
reſolution, with the lepers of *Samaria*, 2 *Kings* vii.
3, 4. "Why ſit we here till we die? If we enter
"into the city there is famine, if we ſit ſtill we
"periſh, if we go out we may find bread;" and
ſo the poor ſoul, with *Mordecai* and *Eſther*, comes
to this concluſion, *If I periſh, I periſh*, nothing but
periſhing as I am, I will go and ſeek ſalvation in
Jeſus Chriſt, and it may be I will find it; Who
knows

knows but he may turn again? Resolution is born a man at first a giant, it goes out to the outmost border of want the first day; wanting makes desire, and desire attended with some hope, makes up resolution and purpose; and when the soul is thus principled, then in the third room it comes forth to action: Desire and hope give legs to the soul for the journey, and now the wanting Christian ye shall find his hand in every good turn, his feet in every ordinance; ye shall find him praying, reading and hearing. It is true resolution is born a man, and practice is born but a child, and scarcely will come up in many years to the stature of resolution; always diligence and violence is the qualification of his practice, *Heb.* xi. 6. *Matth.* xi. 12. and this written upon his using of means, *How love I the Lord? I am sick of love.* The Christian's diligence in the use of means proclaims his earnest desire to obtain, whereas many a man's practice speaks but a coldrife and indifferent spirit; that is a neutral who cares not whether he obtain or miss: Some Christians have some missings of God, and spiritual things, but alas their want, and sight of want makes them twice miserable, because it puts not their hand to action; the slothful and sluggard's desire slays him, *because his hands refuse to labour*, Prov. xxi. 25. O! but he finds many difficulties in the way, though he have half a wish, or a raw desire after Christ, yet it never comes further than a conditional wish; a beggar may wish to be a king, he comes to no purpose in it, and therefore his way is called *a hedge of thorns*, whereas a seeking Christian finds a *plain path* where he goes, Prov. xv. 14. The sluggard says, *There is a lion in the way, and a lion in the streets*, he concludes upon the means and duties of religion before ever he try them, *Prov.* xxii. 13. *Prov.* xix. 23. How lazy

is

is he, he will *not bring his hand out of his boſom when he hath put it in?* Thus the lazy and ſecure Chriſtian is a *brother to a great waſter*, his deſire conſumes him; he hath no more religion, but a ſpunk of deſire, and he ſits down in this ſpark of his own kindling, and the life of religion thrives not upon his hand, *Prov.* xviii. 9, 12. His ſeeking muſt have *violence* with it, *Matth* xi. 12. But we may alſo obſerve concerning the Chriſtian, that he is,

3*dly*, Defined on this ſide of time as a ſeeker in heaven, he is an enjoyer, and he ſeeks no more: for how *can the ox low over his fodder?* He ſits down to eat the fruit and ſweat of his labour, and well may he triumphantly ſay, as the antient *philoſopher* ſaid, *I have found, I have found.* But here he is a ſeeker ſtill, whatever he miſs, he is ſtill a ſeeker and whatever he find he is yet a ſeeker; he is named not from his finding but his ſeeking, not from his enjoyment or attainment, but from his endeavour and aim; tho' he find righteouſneſs in Jeſus and remiſſion of ſins, yet he is a ſeeker of grace: though he be juſtified, yet he ſeeks holineſs: There are many who would ſeek no more of God than pardon of ſin, let him deliver them from hell, and they will trouble God with no more requeſts. Do not ſome of your own conſciences ſpeak, that you would ſeek no more from Chriſt than to be ſaved from an ill hour, and to be found in him; whereas *Paul* was not content with this, but made an holy gradation as we read, Philip. iii. 8, &c. He deſires to know the power of Chriſt's reſurrection, and to be made conformable to him by any means; and now when he is found in Chriſt, and juſtified, he counts not himſelf well, or perfect and complete or to have attained that which he ſtruggled earneſtly for. Would not many be content with a Saviour

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ns ſo ſweet: If hope be ſo ſweet, what ſhall the
ing poſſeſſed be? If a grape brought a ſavour and
e ſo refreſhful, what muſt the grapes plucked
m the tree of life be, and the rivers of pleaſures
ich are at God's right hand for evermore be?
not down then Chriſtians upon your enjoyments,
ether they be worldly or ſpiritual, but aſpire to
h things.

SERMON XVI.

t. vi. 33. *But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God,* &c.

THE Chriſtian's chief employment ſhould be to *ſeek the kingdom of God, and the hteouſneſs* thereof, *ſeek firſt,* &c. Upon this he ould firſt and chiefly ſpend his thoughts and af-tions, and pains. We comprehend it in three ngs, (1.) He ſhould ſeek to be clothed upon th Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and this ought to take up his ſpirit; this is the firſt care and the chief con-n: Did not this righteouſneſs weigh much with ul, when he "counted all things but loſs and dung, that he might be found in Chriſt, not hav-ing his own righteouſneſs, but the righteouſneſs which is by faith in Jeſus Chriſt?" *Phil.* iii 8, Now this righteouſneſs is of more concernment an all the world beſide. For,

1ſt. It is *God's righteouſneſs,* Rom. x. 3. 4. 2 r. v. 21. and this holds out a threefold excellence it, (1.) It is God's righteouſneſs, becauſe he ne deviſed it, and found it out; all the world uld not have imagined a way poſſible to ſave loſt nkind, or ever one ſinner of that wretched num-; ſatisfaction to juſtice was needful, and there s none righteous a nong *Adam's* poſterity: But

here God himſelf in his everlaſting counſel h
found it out, and all hath flowed from his lo
the miſſion of Jeſus Chriſt to be the propitiation
our ſins, comes from this bleſſed fountain, 1 J
iv. 9, 10. *Rom* iii. 24, 25. God hath been fram
this righteouſneſs from all eternity, and even
world ſeems to be made for this end: All G
diſpenſation with *Adam*, his making a covenan
works with him, his mutability and liableneſs
fall, and ſo governing all things in his holy pro
dence that he ſhould fall from his own righte
neſs, and involve all his poſterity in the ſame c
demnation with himſelf; all this ſeems to be
reſpect of God's intention and purpoſe, even
dained for this end, that the righteouſneſs of Je
Chriſt might be commended to you, far more th
all the diſpenſation of the law upon *Sinai*; m
than the curſe and the command, the thunder a
the lightning: The very condemnation of the ſcr
ture was all in God's own mind and revealed
alſo, as the means appointed to lead ſinners to t
righteouſneſs, *Rom.* x. 4. Therefore, how preci
ſhould that be to us, that God keeps and preſer
the world for?

2*dly*, By this righteouſneſs alone we can ſta
before God, and therefore it is termed God's ri
teouſneſs; and is not this enough to make it lo
in the eyes of all men? This is the righteouſn
without the law, though it was *witneſſed both*
the law and the prophets: This is the only righ
ouſneſs that juſtifies, when all men are found gui
before God, *Rom.* iii. 19, &c. Now what is it
this world can profit you, if ye want this? Con
ſcend upon all your pleaſures and heart-wiſhes,
you have them all, and now poor ſoul, pray wh
haſt thou! tho' thou haſt gained the world, th
loſes thy ſoul, that thou ſhould uſe the world wi

Let you then get what you ſo eagerly purſue in the world, what will ye do when your ſoul is required by the hand of juſtice, *then whoſe ſhall theſe things* e? Luke xii. 20, 21. By all theſe things a man neither knows love nor hatred; as *Solomon* ſpeaks of nternal enjoyments, *Eccleſ.* ix. 1. But hear the ay, O men how ye may ſtand before God, here is only, will it profit you to enjoy the world, and leſs God; and when all theſe things leave you, nd ye leave them what will ye do? For riches ill not go to the grave with you. All that is here nnot help you in that day, when ye muſt ſtand efore the Judge of all fleſh; if a man be not found Chriſt he is gone, and if he be found in him, en the deſtroying angel paſſes by: Death hath a mmiſſion to do him good, God is become his end in Jeſus. If ye could walk never ſo blame-ſly in this world, all this will not come as a righ-ouſneſs in God's ſight, nor ſtand before him; it only the righteouſneſs of Chriſt that can be a co-ring to ſinners. But,

3*dly*, This is God's righteouſneſs, becauſe it is righteouſneſs of Chriſt who is truly God, and ſo divine. This is the moſt excellent piece in all creation that comes from Jeſus Chriſt, his life, th, and reſurrection. And let all mens inherent ineſs bluſh here and be aſhamed, let all your pray-good wiſhes, your religious obedience be aſham-let them evaniſh as the ſtars before the ſun; the teouſneſs of Chriſt is the bright ſun that makes the dim ſparkles of nature, civil honeſty, and religious education diſappear: Let even angels ſh before him, for they *are not clean in his ſight*, may be *charged with folly*; Innocent *Adam* was a glorious creature, but the ſecond *Adam* the life-g Spirit, and *the Lord from heaven*, hath an infi-y tranſcendent and ſupereminent excellency and

prerogative beyond him, and all the creation
God. Look then upon this Jeſus how he is deſcrib
ed as *the brightneſs of the Father's glory, and t*
expreſs Image of his perſon, Heb. i. 1, 2, 3. C...
15, &c. and wonder that ſuch a glorious One ſhou
become our righteouſneſs, that he ſhould take ou
ſins upon him, 2 *Cor.* v. 21. 1 *Pet.* ii. 24. a
make over his righteouſneſs to us. This is the rig
teouſneſs of the ſaints in heaven, *Rev.* xix. 8. t
is the glory of the ſpirits of juſt men made perfe
Think ye my friends, that the glorious ſaints ſh
wear their own holineſs upon their outſide in he
ven? No, no, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt ſhall co
them, and that ſhall be the upper-garment that
the hoſt of heaven muſt glory in. Now this is
thing that the child new-born, if he had the uſe
reaſon, ſhould firſt cry for, before ever he get
breaſt, to be reconciled to God in Chriſt: Wo
ye then ſpend your time and thoughts upon ot
things, if ye knew what need ye have of his rig
teouſneſs, and how ſuitable it were to your nee
Should not the beggar ſeek food and clothi
Should not the ſick man ſeek health, and the p
man riches, here they are all in Chriſt's righte
neſs? Ye are under the curſe of God, this rig
ouſneſs redeems from the curſe; ye are ſinner
none of you righteous, no not one; but Chriſt
made ſin for us, that we might be made the r
teouſneſs of God in him: O ſinners wonder at
change! hath Chriſt taken on your ſins, that
righteouſneſs might become yours, and will ye
do ſo much as ſeek it? But many a man beg
his own ſoul, and thinks he ſeeks this righteou
in the goſpel; therefore ye would know what
to ſeek his righteouſneſs: If ye ſeek it ye want
own righteouſneſs; and who of you have c
this length, to judge yourſelves that ye be

judg

udged? It is a great difficulty to convince the mul-itude of ſin, that general notion that we are all inners is but the deluſion that many ſouls periſh n; never any will deny themſelves to ſeek another ighteouſneſs, till they be beaten and driven out of heir own: There is need of ſubmiſſion to take and eceive this righteouſneſs, let be to ſeek it. And ow tell me, can ye ſay, that ye have ſeen all in ourſelves as dung and droſs, that ye count all hings but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge f Chriſt Jeſus? *Phil.* iii. 8, 9. That ye have ſeen ll your own privileges and duties loſs, and are ye ven ſenſible that prayer will no more help you, han the cutting off a dog's neck? Ye that lay ſo uch weight upon your being baptized, and upon utward privileges, are ye void of righteouſneſs? No, ye ſeek to eſtabliſh your own, and do not ſub-nit to the righteouſneſs of God. In a word, all ho are ignorant of this righteouſneſs of God in hriſt, ye all ſeek to eſtabliſh your own; there eeds no more, but not one of twenty of you can ell what this is, it is a myſtery: Aſk at any of you, ow ye ſhall be ſaved, ye will ſay, by prayer to od, and the mercy of God; ye cannot tell the eceſſity of Chriſt's coming unto the world.

2*dly*, Ye muſt ſee an impoſſibility to attain a ighteouſneſs, or to ſtand before God another way; hen ye miſs this righteouſneſs and are convinced f ſin, it is not the running to prayer will help or end it: When ye ſee the broken covenant ye fall pon doing ſomething to mend your faults, with me good turns, and ſome will make a few good orks anſwer all the challenges of ſin; alas, this is ſeeking of your own righteouſneſs: Many a poor oken man ſeeks to make up his fortune, poor retched ſinners are building up the breach of the d covenant, putting up props under an old ruin-

ous houſe, ſeeking to eſtabliſh it, and rear it
again; but ye will never ſeek Chriſt, till ye cann
do better, till ye be deſperate of helping yourſelv
without him. Now I appeal to your conſcience
Who among you was ever ſerious in this matt
to examine your own condition, whether you we
enemies or friends? Ye took it for granted all yo
days, no, but never a man will betake himſelf to
imputed righteouſneſs, but only he that lies tak
with his enmity, and is purſued by the avenger
blood, and he flies in to this righteouſneſs as a
of refuge.

3*dly*, Ye muſt ſeek this righteouſneſs, and wh
is it to ſeek it? It is even to take it and to recei
it, it is brought to your door; it is offered, a
the convinced ſinner hath no more to do but hear
en, and this righteouſneſs is brought near unto hi
Prayer to God, and much dealing with him, is o
of the ways of obtaining this righteouſneſs; b
coming to Jeſus Chriſt is the comprehenſive ſho
gate, and therefore it is called *the righteouſneſs*
faith, and the *righteouſneſs of God by faith*. No
ſhall ye be called ſeekers of Chriſt's righteouſne
who will not receive it when it is offered? Ye wh
have ſo many objections and ſcruples againſt t
goſpel, and the application of it, ye in ſo far a
not ſeekers, but refuſers of the goſpel, and diſob
dient; Chriſt's righteouſneſs ſhould meet with
ſeeker not a diſputer; any thing God allows y
to ſeek, certainly he allows you to take and recei
it when it is brought unto you: And therefo
whoever have need of Jeſus Chriſt, not only refu
him not, but ſtay not till they find him come
them: This noble reſolution, I will give myſelf
reſt till I be at a point in this. Seek him as a h
treaſure, as that which your happineſs depends upo
(2.) The kingdom of grace is worthy of all yo
affe

affections and pains; that deſpiſed thing in the world called grace is the rareſt piece of the creation, and if we could look on it aright, we would ſeek grace, and follow after it. Grace extracts a man out of the multitude of men that are all of one maſs; grace ſeparates him from the reſt of the world, and to this purpoſe are theſe uſual phraſes in ſcripture, "Such "were ſome of you----Once ye were darkneſs, but "now are ye light in the Lord; among whom ye "had your converſation in times paſt fulfilling the "deſires of the fleſh." All men are alike by nature and birth, there is no difference, grace brought to light by the goſpel makes the difference, and ſeparates the few choſen veſſels of glory and mercy from the world; "and now ye are not of the world, as "I am not of the world:" All the reſt of mens aims and endeavours cannot do this. Learning makes not a man a Chriſtian, honour makes not a man differ from a *Gentile* or *Pagan*; riches make you no better than infidels: Speak of what ye will, you ſhall never draw a man intirely out of the curſed race of *Adam*, never diſtinguiſh from *Gentiles* before God, till the Spirit of regeneration *blow where he liſteth*. And this is grace's prerogative beyond all other things, all other excellent gifts, even the gift of preaching, praying, all theſe are common, ſo to ſpeak, and in a manner befal to all alike; your external calling is but common, but he gives grace to all his choſen ones. But (2.) Grace puts a man in a new kingdom; it draws a man out of *Satan's* kingdom, and makes him a king, who before was a ſubject: The man was led captive by ſin and Satan at their pleaſure, he ſerved his own corrupt luſts and the prince of this world, ſin reigned in his mortal body, whatever his paſſion and corruption did put him to, he could have no bridle, but as a horſe went on to the battle; and ye may ſee

daily

daily that there is ſcarce one of an hundred that
maſter of himſelf, but he is a ſervant of ſin; b
grace makes him a *prieſt and a king*, Rev. i.
chap. vii. 8, 10. He can now command himſel
ſin reigned before unto death, but now grace reig
through righteouſneſs unto eternal life, *Rom.* v. 2
21. And O! but this victory over a man's ſelf,
more than a man's conquering a ſtrong city: th
victory is more than all the triumphs and trophie
of the world's conquerors; for they could not con
quer themſelves, the little world, but were ſlave
to their own luſts; Some men talk of great ſpirit
that can bear no injury, nay, but ſuch a ſpirit is th
baſeſt ſpirit; the noble ſpirit is that ſpirit which ca
deſpiſe theſe things, and be above them. Grac
puts men upon a throne of eminence above th
world; the Spirit of God makes a man of a nobl
ſpirit. (3.) Grace tranſlates a man from *Satan'*
kingdom to God, and makes him a ſubject, a free-
born ſubject of God or Chriſt's kingdom, and there-
fore *Chriſt is the King of ſaints*, Rev. xv. 3. Ou
Lord and Saviour hath an *everlaſting kingdom*, 2
Pet. i. 11. We were ſubjects of the powers of dark-
neſs, but grace makes the tranſlation into the king-
dom of *God's* own *dear Son*, Col. i. 13. Now what
an unſpeakable privilege is this to be one of Chriſt's
ſubjects, who is our dear Saviour and King? Sure-
ly we muſt all be great courtiers. *David* the great
king of *Iſrael* had this for his chief dignity, his
ſtile of honour, *the ſervant of the Lord*, as kings
uſe to write down themſelves, and this was his title,
ſervant of God: *Paul* gloried much in this, *Paul
an apoſtle and ſervant of Jeſus Chriſt* And ſure all
the families of heaven and earth may think it their
higheſt honour to get liberty to bow their knees to
Jeſus, *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*, the *firſt-
born of God's creation*. The converted man is turned
from

from the power of *Satan* to God: Mark but the emphaſis of theſe two terms, mark the *whence* or *from*, that it is from *Satan*, the great deſtroyer of mankind, the firſt tranſgreſſor and deceiver, and how great is his power, tyranny and dominion! He had us all in chains reſerved for the day of judgment; but to what a happy change! grace turns us from him, but the term to which is more admirable, it is *to God*, *to Chriſt*, to true religion; to God himſelf moſt High: And O! but this muſt be a more wonderful and excellent change than our converſion from darkneſs to light, from hell to heaven; theſe are but ſhadows of this glorious converſion. (4.) Grace makes a man likewiſe a *partaker of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. This is the image and glory of God, this is the imitation and reſemblance of God's ſpotleſs holineſs and purity, *be ye holy, as I am holy*, 1 Pet. i. 15, 16. Every creature hath ſome dark characters of God, ſome things ſpeak his power, ſome things his wiſdom, but this he hath called his own image; and ſo the Chriſtian is more like unto God than all the world beſide: This is the magnifying of a man, and making him but *a little lower than the angels*, Pſal. viii. 3, 4. Therefore God loves grace better than all the creation, holineſs is a great beauty, and God requires to be worſhipped in the *beauties* of it; albeit grace be often clouded with infirmities, and ſometimes is reckoned deſpicable, becauſe of the veſſel it is in, *yet it is precious as the fineſt gold, and more precious than any rubies*: It is like gold in aſhes, not the leſs excellent in itſelf, though it appear not ſo: But ſin is the *devil's* image and likeneſs, and therefore *Satan* is called the father of ſinners; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the "luſts of your father ye will do." O but ſin hath an ugly ſhape! it is the only ſpot in the face of the creation

creation which God's ſoul abhors, for *he loves righteouſneſs, and hates iniquity*, Pſal. xlv. 6, 7. But there is one thing more (5.) That may commend grace to all your hearts, grace is the way to glory, it gives title and right to or at leaſt declares it, it is inſeparably joined; grace is glory in the bud, and glory is the flower of grace, grace is young glory and glory is old grace: *Without holineſs it is impoſſible to ſee God's face in peace*, no man can come unto heaven without grace; glorification is the firſt link of the chain, *Rom.* viii. 30. But ſanctification muſt interveen firſt, but no unclean thing can enter into heaven; but he that *gives grace gives glory*, Pſal. lxxxiv. 11. Heaven cannot receive many of you, becauſe ye have not holineſs; but it may commend holineſs unto you, that it *miniſters an abundant entrance into the everlaſting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* As much as eternity is beyond the poor ſpan of your time, as much is grace and holineſs (whereon depends your everlaſting condition) preferable to all things of this preſent vain world. O! but the children of men have many vain purſuits of the creature, that when it is had is nothing and vanity; ye labour to ſecure an inch of your being, and to have contentment here in this half day, and never look beyond it to many millions of ages, when ye are to continue, your honour, your pleaſure, your gain, your credit, many ſuch things like theſe can have no influence on the next world; theſe cannot go through death with you: Only grace and holineſs begun here are conſummated in glory, and makes the poor man that was miſerable for a moment, eternally happy.

SERMON

SERMON XVII.

Matth. vi. 33. *But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

THE perfection even of the moſt upright creature, ſpeaks always ſome imperfection in compariſon of God, who is moſt perfect. The heaven, the ſun and moon, in reſpect of lower things here, how glorious do they appear, and without ſpot? But behold they are not clean in God's ſight! how far are the angels above us who dwell in clay, they appear to be a pure maſs of light and holineſs; yet even theſe glorious beings cannot behold this light without covering their faces, theſe God may charge with folly. *God is light*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *John* i. 5. this is his peculiar glory, for *in him there is no darkneſs at all.* Is there any thing more excellent and divine, than to ſeek God, and find him, and enjoy him? Yet even that holds forth the emptineſs of the creature in its own boſom, that cannot be ſatiated within but muſt come forth to ſeek happineſs; nay, even the greateſt perfection of the creature, ſpeaks out the creature's own ſelf-indigence moſt, becauſe its happineſs is the removal from itſelf unto another, even unto God the fountain of life.

Now the enjoyment of this *kingdom of God* mentioned in the text, holds forth man's own inſufficiency for well-being within himſelf; but *ſeeking this kingdom* declares a double want, a want of it altogether: Not only he hath it not in himſelf, but not at all, and ſo muſt go out and ſeek it. God is bleſſed in himſelf, and ſelf-ſufficient, and all-ſufficient

cient to others; without is nothing but what ha flowed from his inexhauſted fulneſs within; ſo tha though he ſhould ſtop the conduit, by withdrawin his influence, and make all the creatures to evaniſ as a brook, or a ſhadow, he ſhould be equally i himſelf bleſſed. *Darkneſs and light are both alik to thee,* ſays *David* in another ſenſe, Pſal. cxxxix 11, 12. and indeed they are all one in this ſenſe that he is no more perfected and bettered when a the innumerable company of angels and the ſpirit of juſt men made perfect, follow him with an eter nal ſong, nor before the mountains and hills were when nothing was brought forth. Many thouſan more worlds would add nothing to him, nor di miniſh any thing from him: It is not ſo with man he is bounded and limited, he cannot have well being in his own breaſt; he was indeed create with it in the enjoyment of God, which was hi happineſs, ſo that he had it not to ſeek but to keep he had it not to follow after, but to hold it ſtill faſt But now alas! he hath loſt that, and become miſe rable. Once all *Adam's* poſterity were void of hap pineſs; by catching at a preſent ſhadow of pleaſure and ſatisfaction to his ſenſes, he loſt this excellen ſubſtance of bleſſedneſs in communion with God Now how ſhall this be recovered again? How ſhal this pearl of great price be found?

Certainly we muſt agree upon two principles, and according to them walk, ere we come within reach of this. It is a great queſtion that is of more momen than all the debates among men; How ſhall man's ruin be made up, and the treaſure be found? If ye think it concerns you, I pray you hearken to this, and condeſcend upon theſe two grounds, that the queſtion may be right ſtated. One is, we have all loſt happineſs, fallen from the top of our excellency into the loweſt dungeon of miſery. We are caſt down

wn from heaven to hell. There needs not much persuade you of the truth of this in general, but s who ponders it in their hearts! And until ye ink more seriously upon it, ye will never be seous in the search for reparation of it. All of you your daily experience find that ye are miserable eatures; ye have no satisfaction nor contentent, ye are compassed about with many infirmies and griefs, but this is but an appendix of your sery: All the calamities of this life are but a nsequent, a little stream of that boundless ocean misery that is yet insensible to you. Therefore ter into your own hearts, and consider what Aam once was, and what ye now are, nay, what will all quickly be, if God prevent it not: We born heirs of wrath and hell; it is not only the finite loss of that blessed sight of his face for evermore, which an eternal enjoyment of creature pleares could not compensate the want of one hour; t it is the kingdom of darkness, and the devil t we are all born to inherit. Let this then once e root in your heart, that ye are in extreme miry, and a remedy must be provided, else ye must rish: Now when this principle is established, ye ust agree upon this also. "But out of myself I must go, blessedness I must have, it is not in me; while I look in, there is nothing but all kind of emptiness, and which is worse, all kind of misery; not only the common lot of creatures (that none is sufficient to its own well-being) is incident to me: But I have lost that being which I had in another, which was my well-being, and do now possess, or shall shortly possess all misery." Now re ye settled upon these two? I am not happy, I must go out of myself to find it; it is not in me, *in my flesh dwells no good thing*, in my spirit and flesh both is nothing good. Ask then this great que-

stion,

ſtion, Whither ſhall I go? What ſhall I do
find it? All men know they muſt ſeek it, but Chr
tells where they ſhall ſeek it, and whither they ſh
go; The word of the goſpel is for this very pu
poſe to anſwer this queſtion. If we were ſenſi
that we had loſt happineſs, certainly we would
earneſt in this queſtion, Where ſhall it be recov
ed? What ſhall I ſeek after? And no anſwer wou
ſatisfy but the goſpel itſelf, that directs unto t
very fountain of life, and holds forth the kingdo
of God as the true happineſs of men to be ſoug
Seek ye firſt (ſays Chriſt) *the kingdom of God, a*
the righteouſneſs thereof; here is only a ſolid a
ſwer, ſeek me, for I am eternal life, I am the l
and the light of men: Oh, that your ſouls anſw
ed, with *David*, *thy face Lord I will ſeek. Pe*
had ſought and found, and thought himſelf w
ſo that he anſwers Chriſt with great vehemen
when he ſaid unto his diſciples, *Will ye alſo lea*
me? Peter ſaith, Leave thee Lord, "To wh
"ſhould we go but unto thee, for thou haſt t
"words of eternal life? And we believe and a
"ſure, that thou art the Chriſt, the Son of the li
"ing God, *John* vi. 66, &c. It were all the abſ
"dity in the world to leave thee, or to go to a
"other thing for life itſelf; ſhall not death
"found, if I leave life: It were madneſs not
"ſeek thee, but what ſhall it be called to lea
"thee, when I have found and taſted thee to be
"good." Every man miſſes happineſs and juſt
cation within himſelf, and ſo is upon the ſea
after it; but is it not ſtrange, that all the expe
ences of nations, and generations conjoined in o
cannot hold forth even a probable way of atta
ing it. Gather then all in one, the ſum and re
is, *We have heard the fame thereof with our ea*
but it is hid from the eyes of all living, as we r
mo

d more fully, and should apply what *Job* said of dom to the true happiness of man, *Job* xxviii. to the end of that chapter. Certainly there is ne fundamental and common mistake among n; they know not what was once man's happi-s, and so it is impossible they can seek the right edy. Look upon us all, what do we seek after? is some present thing, some bodily and tempo- thing that men apprehend their happiness lyes ; and so whether they attain it or not, or being ined, it doth not answer our expectation; and s still are we disappointed, and our base scent comes a vain pursuit, whether we overtake it or . Every man proposes this within himself as the nciple of his life and conversation; what shall I k af.er? What shall I spend most of my time and ctions upon to drive at? And alas! all men, save se whose eyes the Spirit openeth, err in the very ndation: One man propones honour to himself, other pleasure, and a third riches, and the most t seek all of them, some accomodation and sa-faction in a present world. And almost every n conceives he would be blessed, if he had that ich he wants, and sees another have.

Now while mens designs are thus established, all st be wrong; the ship is gone forth, but it will ver land on the coast of happiness. And thus we e men seek many things, they are divided among any thoughts and cares, because no one thing is und that can satisfy, and so we have put ourselves on an endless journey to go through all the crea-es; neither one, nor altogether have what we nt, and neither one, nor all can be had, or pos-ed with assurance, though it had it: But the spel comes to lay a right foundation, and frame right principle within us. *Seek ye first the king-m of God*, here is the principal design that should

be driven at; and if men would make it, and ſ
low it, O how ſhould they be ſatisfied with
fulneſs of that kingdom, the vaſt dimenſions of
the incorruptibleneſs of it!

Now there is one of two ye muſt fall upon, eit
many things, or one thing. All that a man can ſe
after is here ranked, on the one ſide is many thin
all theſe things, that is food, raiment, honour, pl
ſure, and ſuch like, that concern the body, or m
condition here in this world, and theſe things a m
hath need of, verſes 31 and 32. "Therefore t
"no thought, ſaying, What ſhall we eat? Or w
"ſhall we drink? Or wherewithal ſhall we
"clothed? (for after all theſe things do the G
"tiles ſeek) for your heavenly Father knoweth t
"ye have need of theſe things." Nay, there
but one thing that is ſet up againſt all theſe ma
things, namely, the *kingdom of God and his righ*
ouſneſs: Now without all controverſy the m
unity be, there will be the more ſatisfaction. If
others things be equal, it is a kind of torment
have ſo many doors to go to for help. If a m
could have all in one, he would think many thi
a great vexation and burden. If any one thing
in it as much as to anſwer all our neceſſities, t
one thing would be of great price, beyond ma
things, having but ſo much vertue among th
all. I ſhall ſuppoſe then, that there were real ſa
faction and happineſs to be found in the afflue
and conjunction of all created things here; that th
was ſome creature that could anſwer every neceſ
of men; yet I ſay, would ye not exchange all t
variety, and multitude, if ye could find one th
that did all that to the full, that ſo many did,
no more, then certainly ye would chooſe a var
in one thing, beyond the ſcattered ſatisfaction
many things: But when it is not to be found in
th

ese things, and though it were, yet all these are
t consistent together, then of necessity we must
ake another search. I say then in the name of
sus Christ, that if ye seek satisfaction in this pre-
t world, ye shall be disappointed; ye may be
your days sowing and plowing, but ye shall not
the harvest: Ye shall never reap the fruit of your
bour, but in the end of your days, shall be fools,
l see yourselves to have been so, when ye thought
urselves wise. I shall also suppose that ye have
ained what ye have with so much vexation toil-
for, that ye had your barns and coffers full, that
the varieties of human delights were still attend-
you, that ye were set upon a throne of eminen-
above others, and in a word, that ye had all that
ur soul desired, so that no room was left empty
rmore desire, and more grief entered into your
arts; Are ye blessed for all that? No certainly,
ye do but consider that with all ye may lose your
n souls, and that quickly, and that your spirits
ust remove out of that palace of pleasure and de-
ht into eternal torment, and then count, are ye
essed or not? What gained ye? It is madness to
ckon upon this life, it is so inconsiderable when
mpared with eternity. A kingdom what is it,
hen a man shall be deprived for evermore of the
ngdom of God, and inhabit the kingdom of dark-
s under the king of terrors? Do ye think a *stage-*
yer a happy man that for an hour hath so much
rth and attendance, and for all his life-time is
pt in prison without the least drop of these com-
rts? Will not such a man's momentary satisfac-
n make hell more unsatisfying, and add grounds
bitterness to his cup; for it is misery to have
en happy.

Nay, but this is a fancied supposal, all this how
ll soever it be, was never, and never shall be

within the reach of any living: Ye may reckon forehand, and lay down two things as demonſt ed by ſcripture and all mens experience. One *All is vanity and vexation of ſpirit* under the All that ye can attain by your endeavours for age, and by ſweating and toiling, will not g you one hour's ſatisfaction, without ſome w ſome vexation, either in wanting or poſſeſſi nay though you had all, it could not give you tisfaction, the ſoul could not feed upon theſe thin it would be like ſilver and gold which could ſave a ſtarving man, or nouriſh him as meat drink doth: A man cannot be happy in a ma palace, for the ſoul is created with an infinite ca city to receive God, and all the world will not his room. Another is, That it is impoſſible for to attain all theſe things. One thing is inconſiſt with another, and your neceſſity requires bo Now then, how ſhall ye be ſatisfied when they c not meet? I think then the ſpirits of the moſt p of us do not riſe very high, to ſeek great things this world: We are in ſuch a lot among men mean that we have not great expectation of weal pleaſures, honours, or ſuch like; Oh then ſo mu the more take heed to this, and ſee what ye reſo to ſeek after: Ye do not expect much ſatisfacti here, then I pray you hearken to this one thi *ſeek the kingdom of God.*

This kingdom of heaven and righteouſneſs equivalent unto, nay they exceedingly ſurpaſs the ſcattered perfections and goodneſs among th many things, or *all things* that God hath promi to add to them in the text. Why ſhould I ſay eq valent! alas, there is no compariſon; *For I rec* (ſays Paul, Rom. viii. 18, 19.) *that the ſufferi of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compar with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us. For* earn

rneſt expectation of the creature waiteth for the anifeſtation of the ſons of God. What this king-om is in itſelf, is beyond our conception; but l theſe things which God will add thereunto, are be conſidered only as an appendix to it. Is not aven an excellent kingdom? All that ye are now iling about, and taking thought for, theſe, *all ſe things* (as a conſequent to itſelf,) food and iment, and ſuch like, *ſhall be given you* as your avenly Father judges fit; *For godlineſs*, (ſays the oſtle, 1 Tim. iv. 8.) *is profitable unto all things, ving the promiſes of this life*, as well as of *the e to come*. I think then, if all men would but ra-nally examine this buſineſs, they would be forc-to cry out againſt the folly and madneſs of too ny men, who have their portion only in this , *Pſal.* xvii. 14. What is it ye ſeek, ye flee from dlineſs as your great enemy, ye think religion adverſary to this life and the pleaſures of it? Nay it is a huge miſtake, for *it hath the promiſes this life, and that which is to come*. Ye cannot de to have Chriſt's kingdom within you, ye will have him to rule over you, ye will not renounce , and your own righteouſneſs: But conſider, O n, that here is that which ye ſhould ſeek after; e is wealth and honour, and long life, and plea-s at God's right hand for evermore. Ye ſeek ny things firſt, and ye will not ſeek this one thing dful, *Luke* x. 41, 42. But there is the way to what ye ſeek more certainly and ſolidly, "ſeek irſt the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs, nd all theſe other things" will come of will, ye d not ſeek them, for your heavenly Father ws beſt what ye need. Behold what a ſatisfying ion this kingdom is! when the pitch and height mens attainments in this world is but a conſecta-an appendicle of it, what muſt this kingdom

be in itſelf, when all theſe things follow as atte
dants? Here then is one thing worth all, and mo
than all, even *Jeſus Chriſt who is all in all*, C
iii 10, 11. Ye ſpeak of many kingdoms, nay, b
here is one kingdom, the kingdom of grace a
glory, that hath in it eminently all that is ſcatt
ed among all things; it unites us to Jeſus Chri
" in whom all the fulneſs of the Godhead dwel
" and ye are complete in him, who is the head
" all principality and power," *Col.* ii. 9, 10. In
houſe is fatneſs, and ye ſhall be ſatisfied with t
and drink of theſe rivers of everlaſting pleaſu
that are at his right hand, *Pſal.* xxxvi. 8, 9. P
xvi. 11. When the pious *Pſalmiſt* was overcha
ed with the very forethought and apprehenſion
this, he ſays, " How excellent is thy loving ki
" neſs, O God, therefore the children of men
" their truſt under the ſhadow of thy wings, P
" xxxvi. 7. O how great is thy goodneſs, wh
" thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, wh
" thou haſt wrought for them that truſt in the
Pſal. xxxi. 19, 20. When the ſight of it afar
and the taſte of it in this wilderneſs, is of ſo m
vertue, what ſhall the drinking of that well-h
be, when the ſoul ſhall be drowned in it?

As theſe things are divided, on the one ſide, *
things, and on the other, *one kingdom* more w
than all, ſo are men divided accordingly: On
one hand are the *nations* and *Gentiles*, on the o
a poor handful, ye my *diſciples*. " Seek ye
" Chriſt) firſt the kingdom of God, and his ri
" ouſneſs, and all theſe things, what ye ſhall
" and what ye ſhall drink, or wherewithal ye
" be clothed, ſhall be added: For after all
" things the Gentiles ſeek, and your Father k
" eth that ye have need of them. Fear not
" flock, for it is your Father's good pleaſure to

you the kingdom," *Luke* xii. 29 41. Now this viſion hath been always in the world, *For many y*, Pſal. iv. 6, 7. *Who will ſhew us any good?* But ho have their affections gathered in one channel ward one thing, it is as it were but one man, But Lord lift thou up the light of thy counte- nance upon us; thou haſt put gladneſs in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and wine increaſed." Here then is even the courſe of e world, the way of the multitude; they have eir way ſcattered, their gain lies in many arts: any things they muſt ſeek, becauſe they forſake e one thing neceſſary, when they forſake the one fountain of living water, they muſt dig up, and hew out to themſelves many broken ciſterns, that can hold no water," no one to help ano- er. This is even proclaimed by the converſation a great part of the world. Do ye not declare this your eager purſuit of this world, and the things it, and your careful thoughts of it, that ye have o mind of eternity, or the kingdom to come? Ye ek nothing but things here, and theſe do not de- end after you. Be perſuaded I beſeech you, be erſuaded of this, that when ye have your hearts elow, that ye are no better, the moſt part of you an *pagans*; ye have this pretence, that it is neceſ- ry to live and follow ſome calling; it is true in- eed: But, is it not more neceſſary to live for ever ter death, than for a moment? Godlineſs will ot prejudge this life or thy calling; but ye ſeek ter theſe things, as if ye were to live eternally in is vain world: Ye could toil no more, take no ore thought for a million of ages, than ye do now r the morrow. This prejudges and ſhuts out all oughts of heaven or hell; ye are called to a king- om, this is offered unto you, will ye be ſo mad to refuſe it, and embrace the dunghill, and ſcrape

it ſtill together? We declare unto you in his name who is truth itſelf, that if ye will be perſuaded t be Chriſtians indeed, ye ſhall have theſe outwar things ye have need of, without care and anxiet which now ye are tormented for. And for ſupe fluities, what need ye care for them; a reaſonab man ſhould deſpiſe them, and much more a Chr ſtian. If ye would not be as *pagans* without th church, ye muſt be ſober in theſe things, mortifie and dead unto them. There ſhall be no real diff rence between thee and a *heathen*, in the day of a pearing before Chriſt's tribunal, O Chriſtian, exce thou haſt denied and deſpiſed this world, and ſoug principally the things that are above. Is Chriſt anity no more I pray you, but a name? Ye wou all be called Chriſtians, why will ye not be ſo i deed; for the name will never advantage you, b in the day of judgment, it ſhall be the greateſt a ceſſion and weight unto your guiltineſs, and al to your judgment. Ye would all now be accoun ed Chriſtians, but if ye be not ſo in truth, and i deed, the day will come that ye ſhall wiſh fro your ſoul ye had wanted the name alſo, and h lived among theſe *Gentiles* and *Pagans* whoſe co verſation ye did follow; for it ſhall be more tol rable for the covetous worldly *Pagan* in that da than the covetous Chriſtian.

Oh that ye were once perſuaded that there is inconſiſtency in them, to ſeek theſe many thing and this one kingdom. "But ſeek ye firſt the kin "dom of God, and his righteouſneſs," in oppo tion to the *Gentiles* ſeeking of *many things*. may ſeek the world, but if ye ſeek it as if ye ſoug it not, if ye uſe it as if ye uſed it not, "or uſe t "world as theſe who do not abuſe it, knowing th "the faſhion thereof paſſes away:" Certainly cannot withal ſeek grace and glory, 1 *Cor.* vii. 29, 3

Therefor

Therefore Chriſt ſays to enforce this exhortation, Matth. vi. 24. "No man can ſerve two maſters, "for either he will hate the one, and love the "other, or elſe he will hold to the one, and deſpiſe "the other: ye cannot ſerve God and mammon." I fear many of you conceive that this belongs not to you; theſe who are not naturally covetous and greedy, who are not ſtill in anxiety and perplexity about the things of the world, will poſſibly conceive themſelves free: Nay, but look upon the diviſion that Chriſt makes. Was there not many a heathen man among the nations as free of that covetouſneſs noted among men? Were there not as gallant ſpirits among them, that cared as little for riches as any of us? Nay, men every way of a more ſmooth and blameleſs carriage than the moſt part of us are; yet behold the conſtruction that Chriſt puts on them, *after all theſe things do the nations ſeek after:* I think many of them have declaimed more againſt the baſeneſs of covetous ſpirits, than many Chriſtian preachers, and in the very practice of it, have outſtripped the moſt part of the Chriſtian world; yet in the ſcripture-ſenſe, even all theſe who have cried down the world, are but lovers of it, and of themſelves too. How can this be? It is certain every man is compoſed of deſires and breathings after ſome thing without himſelf; ſome mens deſires are more ſhallow and low than others; one man hath honour in admiration, and may deſpiſe riches, another follows his pleaſure, and may neglect both theſe: Nay, poſſibly a man may be moderate in all theſe things, ſo that none can challenge him, and yet he is but a lover of the world, it is his maſter he ſerves, and the idol he worſhippeth; becauſe no man wants one, or many idols, ſomething to take up his affection and deſires: Now though ſuch a man ſeems moderate in theſe

in

in compariſon of others whoſe hearts run more aft
them, yet becauſe there is no other thing, that do
take up his heart ſo much as theſe, he is but i
Chriſt's account among the heathen nations. Som
of you are not in great expectations, ye have bu
mean projects, ye ſeem content with few thing
ye are not vexing yourſelves as others do, but le
the world come and go as it pleaſes, without muc
diſquiet. This I ſay, may be the temper of ſom
natural ſpirits, yet I aſk ſuch of you, Is there i
any thing elſe ye ſeek more after, or ſpend mor
time and thought upon, and what is that? Is ther
any other thing ye are more taken up with, than
your preſent eaſe and accomodation in this life?
No certainly, ye cannot ſay ſo, however your pro-
jects be mean and low, yet they are confinedwithin
time and things preſent, and the kingdom of grace
and glory, comes not much in your mind; then
I ſay thou art but a lover of the world, mammon
is thy god, thou ſeeks not the kingdom of heaven,
and ſhall not obtain it, for that which the nations
ſeek after is thy predominant.

Will ye then I beſeech you, gather in your hearts
to conſider this: Is it a light matter we ſpeak of,
life or death? Doth it not concern you as much as
you are worth? Therefore conſider it as ſeriouſly
as if you were going hence to be no more. Many
of you will not grant worldly-mindedneſs a ſin,
when ye make it a god, and ſacrifice unto it, ye
fancy that ye are ſeeking heaven; I pray you do
not deceive your ſouls, give them as good meaſure
as ye would do your bodies in any thing. Would
ye ſay ye were ſeeking after any thing, I ſuppoſe
to find ſuch a friend to ſpeak to, would ye, I ſay,
think that ye earneſtly deſired to ſee that friend,
and ſought him, if ye did all the day take up your
time with other petty buſineſs that might be done

at

at any time? How can ye imagine ye ſeek not the world but heaven; when if ye would look back upon the current and ſtream, both of your affections and endeavours, ye would find they have run this way toward your preſent eaſe and ſatisfaction; ye do not give one intire hour to the thought of Jeſus Chriſt and his kingdom, it may be in a whole week.

Are ye then ſeekers of the kingdom? If ye did but examine one day how it is ſpent, ye might paſs a judgment upon your whole life. Do ye ſeek that firſt which is feweſt times in your thoughts, and leaſt in your affections, and hath leaſt of your time beſtowed on it? Alas, do not flatter yourſelves, that ye ſeek firſt what is often in your mind, which uſes to ſtir up your joy or grief, or deſire moſt: It is this preſent world only, and this preſent world is your portion; ye ſhall loſe the kingdom of heaven by ſeeking to make the world ſure. As for the children of God, ye who will be his diſciples, (to ſuch he ſpeaks here) it becomes not you to be like the heathens: Ye ought moſt of all to adorn your holy profeſſion, your high calling to a kingdom above. If then ye ſeek theſe things below, as if ye ſought them not, ye ought to make religion your main buſineſs, elſe ye are not indeed religious: If Chriſtianity take not up a man, he hath not the thing, but the name. *Seek firſt*, that is, chiefly, principally, and above all, *the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs:* Nay, this is more ſtrange, it is a firſt that hath no ſecond; ſeek *this firſt* ſo as if ye ſought nothing elſe, and *all things* neceſſary here ſhall be ſuperadded to the ſeeking and finding of this kingdom.

This is that which I would have engraven on all our hearts, that there is a neceſſity of making Chriſtianity our calling and trade, our buſineſs and employment,

ployment, else we must renounce it: It will ta
our whole man, our whole time, not spare hou
and by thoughts; ye have a great task to accon
plish, a great journey to make. "If ye give not a
"diligence to add to your faith, virtue, knowledg
"temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kin
"ness and charity, ye are certainly blind, and s
"not afar off, and have not been purged from you
"old sins," 2 *Pet.* i. 5----11. This imports tha
these who make not religion their great comprehen
sive study, do neither know eternity, nor see int
it. Oh, how may this word strike unto the heart
of many Christians, and pierce as a sword! Is ou
lazy, indifferent and cold service at some appointe
hours, all diligence? or, is it diligence at all? I
there not more diligence and fervor in other things
than this, to add grace to grace? Who is covetous
of such a game? Are not many more desirous of
adding lands and houses to their lands and houses,
and money to their stock, than to add to their faith
virtue? &c. Who among you is enlarging his de-
sires as the grave after conformity to Jesus Christ,
and the righteousness of his kingdom, that this trea-
sure of grace may abound? Alas, we are poor
mean Christians, because we are negligent! for *the
hand of the diligent maketh rich*, Prov. x. 4. But
we become poor in grace, because we deal with
slack hand. Is there any great thing that is attain-
able without much pains and sweating! *Difficilia
quae pulchra.*

Think ye to come to a kingdom, by sleeping
through some custom of godliness? "Seest thou a
"man diligent in his business, that man shall stand
"before kings, he shall not stand before mean men,"
Prov. xxii. 29. this advances him to be a courtier;
and is not this business of Christianity more consi-
derable to be diligent about, when it advances a
man

man into the court of heaven, unto his preſence in "whoſe favour is life, and whoſe loving-kindneſs "is better than life?" And not only ſo, but if ye be diligent here ye ſhall obtain a kingdom: "Seek "firſt the kingdom of God, the hand of the dili-"gent ſhall bear rule, but the ſlothful ſhall be un-"der tribute," *Prov.* xii. 24. If ye make this your buſineſs, and ſpend your ſpirits in it, ye ſhall be kings and prieſts with God in the kingdom above, that may ſuffer many partakers without diviſion or emulation. It is he that *overcomes* that ſhall have the *new name*, the *white raiment*, the *crown of life*, and all the glorious things which are promiſed to them that *overcome* in the ſecond and third chapters of the *Revelation*. O what glad tidings are theſe! this is the goſpel of peace, this is the joyful ſound that proclaims unto us ſo great, ſo excellent things as a kingdom, the kingdom of God, an everlaſting kingdom like God, a kingdom glorious as he is, a kingdom ſuitable to his royal Majeſty, and the magnificence of his palace above. Are we called into this by the goſpel, and would ye know what is the ſum thereof? It is this, Ho every one that will have great things, ho every one that will be a king to God, and to bear rule over kings in the great day; come here it is, overcome yourſelves here in the *Lamb that hath overcome*, follow Jeſus "the captain "of your ſalvation, who for the joy and glory "which was ſet before him," deſpiſed all the glory of this world, and the *pains* and *ſhame* of *the croſs*, Heb. xii. 1, 2. "Why do ye ſpend your money "for that which is not bread, and your labour for "that which ſatisfieth not?" *Iſa.* lv. 1, 2, 3. All ye toil about, what is it, childrens fancies? Such houſes and kingdoms as they build in the ſand: Why ſpend ye your time and labour upon earthly things that are at an end? Here is a kingdom wor-

thy

thy of all mens thoughts, and affections, and time the diligent ſhall have it: Gird up the loins of your mind, and ſeek it as the one thing needful. Many of you deſire this kingdom, but alas! theſe are ſluggards wiſhes, ye have fainting deſires after it; your deſires conſume and waſte you: But ye put not forth your hand, and ſo ye have nothing. "The "ſoul of the ſlugguard deſireth and hath nothing "but the ſoul of the diligent ſhall be made fat," *Prov.* xiii. 4. Do ye ſee any growing Chriſtian, but he that is much in the exerciſe of godlineſs, and very honeſt in it? See ye any fat ſouls, but diligent ſouls? Our barrenneſs and leanneſs hath negligence written upon it. Do ye not wonder that we are not fat and flouriſhing, as palms and cedars in the courts of our God? Certainly it is no wonder. Is it not a wonder that our ſleeping away ſecure, keeps ſo much as the leaves of a profeſſion upon us? Therefore Chriſtians, let this be your name *ſeekers*, but ſeekers of what? Not of any new religion, but of the good old kingdom of God, proponed to us in the goſpel. And remember that the ſeeker muſt ſeek diligently, if he think that which he ſeeks worthy of finding: "He that comes to God muſt "believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of "them that diligently ſeek him," *Heb.* xi. 6. Your ſeeking will proclaim your eſtimation of what ye ſeek, it will be written on it, what your deſires are. Many mens unfrequent and lazy prayers have this written upon them in legible characters, I care not whether God grant or not. Diligence ſpeaks affection, and affection principles diligence; and if ye be ſeekers, ye muſt be ſo ſtill, till ye find, and have no more want, *when ye have done all ye muſt ſtand*, Eph. vi. 10, 16. When ye have found all ye muſt ſeek, ye do but find in part, becauſe the kingdom of God is but coming in the glory and perfection of it; nay

believe the more ye find, the more ye will ſeek, ecauſe taſting what this kingdom is, can beſt engage e affection and reſolution after it. *Seeking* is an ercise ſuitable to a Chriſtian in this ſtate of pilgri- age, *enjoyment* is for his own country, heaven. nd ſhall not the bitterneſs and pains of ſeeking, weeten the enjoyment of this kingdom when it is ound? This will endear it and make it precious, et it needs no ſupereminent and acceſſory ſweet- eſs, it is ſo ſatisfactory in itſelf. Chriſtians remem- er your name, when you have attained all, ſtill eek more; for there is more to be found here than e have yet found: It is ſitting down on our at- inments that makes us barren and lean Chriſtians. eſires and diligence are the vital ſap of a Chri- ian; enlarge once your deſires as the grave, that ever ſays *I have enough*: And ye have good war- ant ſo to do, becauſe that which ye are allowed to eſire is without bounds and meaſure. It is inex- auſtible, and when once deſires have emptied the oul, and made it capable of ſuch a great kingdom, hen let your ſtudy be henceforth, to fill up that oid with this kingdom: Let your diligence come p to deſires, and at length ye ſhall be what ye ould be, ye ſhall find what ye ſought.

SERMON XVIII.

Mat. vi. 33. *But ſeek ye firſt the kingdom of God,* &c.

O *Seekeſt thou great things for thyſelf* (ſays God to Baruch, Jer. xlv. 6.) *ſeek them not.* How then doth he command us in the text to ſeek a kingdom? Is not this a great thing? Certainly it is greater than theſe great things he would not have *Baruch* to ſeek after, and ye the charges us to ſeek after it.

it. In every kind of creatures there is ſome differenc
ſome greater, ſome leſſer, ſome higher, ſome lowe
ſo there are ſome men far above others in knowled
underſtanding, ſtrength and ſuch like; yet ſuch is t
order God hath made, that the loweſt angel is abo
the higheſt man, ſo that in compariſon of the
the greateſt man is but a mean worm, a deſpiſab
nothing. Among things created, ſome are greate
ſome leſſer; " When I conſider the heavens, t
" work of thy fingers, (ſays *David*) the moon a
" ſtars which thou haſt ordained: What is ma
" that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon
" man that thou viſiteſt him?" *Pſal.* viii. 3,
But when all theſe are compared with God, th
the difference of greater and leſſer diſappears.
the night there are different lights, the moon a
ſtars, *and one ſtar* (ſays Paul) *differeth from anoth*
in glory; ſome are of the firſt, ſome of the ſecon
and moſt of them the third magnitude; nay, b
let the ſun ariſe and all theſe are alike, they are
darkneſs when compared with the ſun's brightne
What then are angels and men to God, who is
" light inacceſſible and full of glory, whom no e
" hath ſeen or can ſee; all nations before him a
" as nothing, yea, they are counted to him leſs tha
" nothing, and vanity," Iſa. xl. 12---19. 1 Tim
vi. 15, 16. The ſun himſelf ſhines not before hi
and the moon gives not her light: Now is it n
ſo proportionably here, if we ſtay within the ſphe
of temporal and worldly things, ſome are grea
ſome ſmall, ſome things of greater, ſome things
leſs conſequence, greater or ſmaller in their appea
ance to us, and in mens fancies: But if we go fu
ther and look into eternity, then certainly all the
will appear ſmall and inconſiderable. This eart
ſeems very ſpacious, and huge in quantity unto
who dwell upon it; we diſcern mountains, a
valley

lleys, ſea and land, and do make many diviſions it: But if one man were above where the ſun is, d looked down upon the earth, he would conſi- it but as one point almoſt inviſible, that had proportion to the vaſt dimenſions of heaven: n ſo it is here, while men abide within their n orb, their natural underſtanding, and do com- e time only with time, and temporal things with mporal, riches with poverty, honour with diſ- ce, pleaſure with pain, learning with ignorance, ength with weakneſs, pleaſant lands and goodly ules with wilderneſſes, and wild deſerts where none dwell. It is no wonder, I think that theſe who mpare themſelves with ſome that commend them- ves, *are not wiſe*, 2 Cor. x. 12, 13. There is but e perfect pattern they ſhould look to, if they would t be deceived; while ye ſtay your thoughts with- theſe bounds, ye apprehend in yourſelves great ds between one thing and another: But if once e Spirit of God enlightned your eyes, and made u to ſee far off, if ye were elevated above your n ſtation, to the watch-tower of the holy ſcrip- es, to behold of theſe by the proſpect of ſaving h, things that are afar off, ſuch as heaven and ll, eternity, ſalvation and condemnation, O how uld all theſe differences in a preſent world evaniſh t of ſight in the preſence of theſe vaſt and infi- e things? Food and raiment are great things to e moſt part of men, therefore do they toil ſo ch about them, and take ſo much thought for em; how to feed, and how to be clothed! how have a full and delicate table, and fine clothes! gain, many others apprehend ſome greatneſs and inency in honour and reſpect among men; o- rs in pleaſure and ſatisfaction to their ſenſes, en as a beaſt would judge; others apprehend me worth and excellence in great poſſeſſions, in

ſilver and gold beſide them, and have a kind complacency in theſe: But if once this kingdom God entered into your heart, if ye ſaw the worth it, the vaſt dimenſions of it, the pleaſure, hono and profit of it, then certainly all other thi would appear to be mean and low, not wo a thought before-hand; advantage and diſadva tage would be all one to you; honour and diſ nour, evil report and good report, pleaſure a pain, would have no diſtance from one anothe This gain, this honour, this pleaſure of the ki dom of God, would ſo overmaſter them, ſo o ſhine them.

Nay I may ſay, if ye but knew your immor ſouls, or your own worth beyond the reſt of creatures, ſuch as ſilver, gold, lands, houſes, &c am confident ye would fall in your eſteem of the they would appear but low, baſe things in reg of the ſoul: Suppoſe even this world came in co petition, (the gain of it now ſeems great gain) I pray you, if ye laid all that world in the bala with your ſoul, what would weigh moſt? Ch holds it forth to a rational man, to judge of "What ſhall it profit a man, if he ſhall gain "whole world, and loſe his own ſoul, or be "away?" Would ye account yourſelves gain when ye have loſt yourſelves? *Matth.* xvi. *Luke* ix. 25. Is not a man better than meat? not your ſouls more precious than the fineſt go When you loſe your ſouls, whoſe ſhall theſe *What ſhall a mnn give in exchange for his ſo* And if there be no one more to poſſeſs or uſe, w profit is it? This then that we have in hand is thing of greateſt moment, and concernment in world. Let me then beſeech you, to weigh t things in the balance of the ſanctuary, your ſo and this world, the kingdom of God, and m

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mporal things, ſuch as food and raiment. Ye never nter into the compariſon of theſe things in your ind, if ye did, would ye not ſee to which ſide the alance would urn: Therefore wewouldhave you ok upon theſe words of our Saviour, which are e juſt balance of the ſanctuary. Behold how the eſtion is ſtated! how the compariſon goeth; it not whether I ſhall want food and raiment, and her neceſſary things here, or the kingdom of od hereafter: It is not thus caſt in the one balance, e preſent life and its accomodations in the other, e life to come, and God's kingdom, indeed if it re ſo, without all controverſy, this kingdom uld carry it. I ſay if there were an inconſiſtency pposed between a life here, and a life hereafter; ppoſe no man can be godly, except he be miſe-ble, poor, naked, afflicted, extremely indigent, I ſay the balance thus caſten, would be clear to men that judged aright: Would not eternity igh down time? Would not an immortal ſoul igh down a mortal body? What proportion uld the raiment of wool, or gold, or ſilk have to white and clean linen, the robes of righteouſ-s, the robes of ſaints, and to the crown of glory t fadeth not away? What proportion would r periſhing pleaſures have to the *rivers of plea-res*, pure, unmixed, undefiled pleaſures *at God's ght hand for evermore?* Would ye thus rate this ſent ſpan, inch and ſhadow of time, if ye con-ered the endleſs endurance of eternity, I am ſure ſon itſelf might be appealed unto, though faith re not to judge.

Though it would hold well enough ſo, yet our rd Jeſus Chriſt ſtates the controverſy otherwiſe, d holds out another balance, that it may be the re convincing and clear, if it were poſſible even overcome natural conſciences with the light of

it; and it is this, in the one hand you may ſee fo
and raiment, things that belong to this life, a
on the other hand, you may behold the *kingd*
of God, and *his righteouſneſs*, grace and glory, a
beſides that, even *all theſe other things*, that ye
ſee in the other hand, food, raiment, &c. *all t*
things ſhall be added.

Wiſdom in the *Proverbs* uſes ſuch a device to ca
poor fooliſh and ſimple men; "Happy (ſays S
"· *mon*) is the man that findeth wiſdom, and
" man that getteth underſtanding. For the m
" chandiſe thereof is better than the merchan
" of ſilver, and the gain thereof than fine go
" She is more precious than rubies: and all
" things thou canſt deſire are not to be compa
" unto her." Here is the weight of wiſdom in
ſelf, ſee how ponderous it is of itſelf; ſo hea
that it may weigh down all that come within
compaſs of deſire, and certainly its compaſs is
finite: But he adds, " Length of days are in
" right hand, and in her left hand riches and
" nour. Her ways are ways of pleaſantneſs, and
" her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to th
" that lay hold upon her." She is a tree of lif
herſelf, tho' ſhe had no acceſſion of other thi
" and happy is every one who retaineth h
Prov. iii. 13-----19.

Now O men, if ye will not be allured with
beauty and excellency of the princeſs. wiſdom
ſelf, then I pray you, look what follows her,
which now ye are purſuing after with much
bour and pains, and all in vain too, is here in
train; look how the compariſon is ſtated: Ch
Jeſus would catch us with a holy guile, and if it
ſucceſs, O! it would be a bleſſed guile to us:
have large and airy apprehenſions of tempo
things, which ye call needful, and ye cannot
h

hold eternal things; ye know not the worth of this kingdom. Ye conceive that godlineſs is prejudicial unto you in this life, that the kingdom of grace will make you miſerable here, and that ye cannot endure; ah, be not miſtaken, come and look again, if godlineſs itſelf will not allure you, if the kingdom itſelf will not weigh with you, then I pray you conſider what an appendix, what a conſectary theſe have; conſider that the ſum is added to the principal, which ye ſo much ſeek after: But ye refuſe the principal, the kingdom. Ye have not right thoughts of godlineſs; "for godlineſs is profitable unto all things, having the promiſes of the life that now is, and that which is to come, 1 *Tim.* iv. 8. Now is not this a faithful ſaying?" if ye believe it ſo to be, "Is it not worthy of all acceptation?"

Ye may have things neceſſary here, food and raiment, and if ye ſeek more, if ye will be rich, and will have ſuperfluities, then ye ſhall fall into many *temptations, ſnares, and hurtful luſts which ſhall drown you in perdition*, 1 Tim. vi. 8---9. Nature and reaſon might check ſuch exorbitancies, for nature is content with few things; therefore believe *that godlineſs with contentment is great gain*: Ye are now only ſeeking temporal gain, but that is neither great gain, nor gain at all when ye loſe your ſoul; for that is an irrecoverable and incomparable loſs. Ye may have theſe outward things, God's bleſſing, and peace with them, and heaven too, if ye chooſe this kingdom before all things, and above all things; but if ye give theſe other things the preheminence, it is uncertain if ye will get what ye ſeek, and ye ſhall certainly be eternal loſers beſide. If there were no more but this kingdom alone, it might weigh all down; if heaven and earth were laid in a balance, would not

heaven (if it were ponderous according to its ma
nitude) would it not weigh down the earth e
ceedingly out of ſight? Would it not evaniſh as
point? Even ſo, though this kingdom of grace an
glory were alone, in oppoſition to all theſe thin
that ye take thought for, it would weigh them dow
eternally. Look what the weight of glory was
Paul when he ſays, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *For our lig
affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for
a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glo
while we look not at the things which are ſeen, b
at the things which are not ſeen; for the thin
which are ſeen, are temporal, but the things whi
are not ſeen are eternal.* The weight of glory
eternal, and far exceeds any thing temporal; t
one ſcale of the balance goes up as it were eterna
out of ſight, out of thought; the one goes up f
lightneſs and vanity, and the other goeth down f
weight, and ſolidity out of ſight, and out of t
thought and imagination. If ye looked upon the
things which are inviſible, and eternal as *Paul* d
it would be ſo with you alſo.

But when withal the earth and its fulneſs is in t
ſcale with God's kingdom, and righteouſneſs, w
not theſe, with that acceſſion weigh down the ear
alone? Is it food and raiment that ye ſeek? Th
I ſay, food and raiment is on this kingdom's f
alſo; and ye ſhall be more ſure of theſe thing
becauſe ye have God's promiſe for them, the wic
ed have not his word, and promiſe for proſperi
even not ſo much as to anſwer their neceſſities, b
only they may ſometimes proſper in the world,
in his providence; but God's people ſhall have h
engaged in their need for their temporal being h
in this world: *O fear the Lord ye his ſaints,*
*there is no want to them that fear him. The you
lions do lack and ſuffer hunger, but they that ſe*

Lord ſhall not want any good thing, Pſal xxxiv. 10. Godlineſs hath the promiſes of this life: ow then ye are more aſſured of temporal things theſe means than any monarch can be. The orld's ſtability depends only upon a command, t your food and raiment here is grounded upon a omiſe; and though heaven and earth ſhould fail d paſs away, yet not one jot of truth ſhall fail: od indeed may change his command if he pleaſes, t not his promiſes. Now then let all the world dge, come and ſee this balance, how on the one nd food, raiment, and all things needful for this eſent life, on the other hand, theſe ſame things ceſſary for our bodies, and well-being here, and at more ſolidly and ſweetly flowing from God's ve, grounded on a promiſe; I think this weighs wn already, if we ſhould ſay no more: But then hold what more is on his right hand, there is a ngdom of God beſide, an eternal kingdom, and is weighs down eternally; all this world is but accеſſion and addition to it. The promiſes of is life are not your portion and inheritance, they e but ſuperadded to your portion, ſo then we have much beſide, an *inheritance incorruptible and defiled*, as the world have for their inheritance, and more ſure and more ſweet beſide. We ight with reverence change that need which *Paul* s on this conſideration, "If we had hope only in this life, we were of all men moſt miſerable," *Cor.* xv. 19. he ſpeaks thus becauſe of afflictions d perſecutions: But on this conſideration we ight ſay, *If we have hope in Chriſt only in this life* e were not of all men moſt miſerable, but moſt eſſed, becauſe we have all theſe things added to , without toil and vexation, without care and xiety, by divine promiſe and providence, with od's bleſſing and favour, what the world takes

thought for, rendeth their hearts for, toils the bodies for, and yet are not ſure of ſucceſs, or they get them, they get a curſe with them.

Now when the balance is thus preſented, wh is your choice? What will ye ſeek after? Will ſeek this preſent world, and loſe the kingdom heaven? Or will ye chooſe to *ſeek firſt the kingd of God and his righteouſneſs*, and then ye ſhall ha in this world what is good for you? The choice ſoon made in mens judgments, ye dare not a of you deny, but it ought thus to be; But wh ſeriouſly ponders theſe things till their minds affe their hearts? Who will ſit down to meditate upo them, and paſs a reſolute and well-grounded choi upon deliberation? Remember what Chriſt ſay *No man can ſerve two maſters*: Ye may indeed ha both theſe things, and the kingdom, but ye canne ſeek them both, they are not ſo conſiſtent; B *ſeek firſt the kingdom of God*, and then *all the things ſhall be given you.*

Now there is no more need of any ſecond ſee ing, for *all theſe things ſhall be added* as an acceſſor to the firſt. O ſee then whoſe projects and thought are towards preſent things! ye ſpend the prim and flower of your affections, and time upon them ye cannot alſo ſeek the kingdom of heaven, unle ye ſeek them as if ye ſought them not, ye canno ſeek this bleſſed kingdom: If ye ſeek not this king dom as the one thing neceſſary, and your ſeekin proclaim that ye account it ſo, ye do not ſeek aright. If ye be careful and troubled about man things, ye proclaim that ye do not think there but *one thing needful*; ye do not like Mary *cho the good part which ſhall not be taken from you*, Luk x. 41, 42. If ye would abandon the diſtracting ca of the world, and let all your anxiety and care ver itſelf here upon the kingdom of God, all theſe thing

woul

would be added beſides the kingdom itſelf; *ſeek the kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs*, I conceive this is added to make us underſtand the better what it is, and what is the way to it: The kingdom of God is the kingdom of grace, in which he rules in us by his Spirit; for Jeſus Chriſt is come for this end, and made grace to ſuperabound over the abounding of ſin, *that as ſin reigned unto death, ſo grace might reign through righteouſneſs unto eternal life by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, Rom. v. 21. that as ſin had a throne in us, ſo grace might have a throne and ſubject, the whole man obedient to that rule of righteouſneſs, that he here holds forth in his word. But this kingdom of God alſo includes the *kingdom of glory*, wherein theſe who overcome this world by faith in the Son of God, reign as kings ſet upon thrones with God the Father of all. Now becauſe the moſt part when they heard of the kingdom of God, dreamed of nothing but a ſtate of happineſs in heaven, and paſſed over the way to it, which is holineſs, and they thought not upon the kingdom of grace, which is preparatory unto, and diſpoſes us for the kingdom of glory: Therefore Chriſt exhorts us alſo to ſeek his righteouſneſs, oppoſite to the righteouſneſs of the *Scribes and Phariſees*, who ſatisfied themſelves with a mere walk before men; this was man's righteouſneſs but not God's. This righteouſneſs may be alſo oppoſed to the rags of our own righteouſneſs, that we ſeek to cover ourſelves with, Iſa. lxiv. 6. The Apoſtle ſays of the *Jews*, Rom. x. 3, 4. "For they being ignorant of God's righteouſneſs, and going about to "eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of God. "For Chriſt is the end of the law for righteouſneſs "to every one that believeth."

Now here is the buſineſs and I would have you

to

to conceive it right; the gospel calls you to a kingdom, this is certainly more than all earthly kingdoms: But how shall ye come to it? Not at the nearest hand, no *per saltum*, no, believe it, ye must come and enter this way, before ye compass the end, and the way to this kingdom is by another kingdom, namely righteousness: It is the kingdom of grace within us, and the fruit of it is this, *deny thyself, and follow me, Mat.* xvi. 24, 25, 26. overcome yourselves, and your corrupt lusts, and *ye shall be more than conquerors.* Kingdoms are gotten by conquest; but here is the greatest conquest and triumph in the world, for a man to overcome himself: He that rules himself and his own spirit, *is greater than he that taketh a city*, Prov. xvi. 32. Other conquerors but overcome men like themselves, and yet are overcome by themselves, and their own passions, and so are but slaves indeed; but if ye deny yourselves, and resign yourselves to Jesus Christ, *ye shall be more than conquerors*, Rom. viii. 37. This then is the kingdom ye must seek first, and it is the first step to the throne of glory; if ye would have a throne after this life, you must have a throne of grace in your hearts: If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed. They truly are kings who are most subject to God, above themselves, and free from the bonds of creatures; this is the glorious liberty of the children of God, to have liberty from him to make sin a captive. It is a righteous kingdom, a kingdom of righteousness, therefore ye must here study righteousness and holiness, "For the grace of God that hath appeared to all "men, and bringeth salvation, teacheth us, that "denying all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, we "should live soberly, righteously, and godly in "this present world: looking for the blessed hope, "and the glorious appearing of the great God, and

our

" our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt," &c. *Tit.* ii. 11, &c. All men love the ſalvation it brings, but do ye love the leſſons it teaches you? Ye would all be glad to have that bleſſed hope, and obtain the ſalvation which the ſaints look for, when Chriſt ſhall appear again in glory; but how few learn and practiſe what the goſpel teacheth, to mortify and deny your corrupt luſts, and live daily in the practice of ſobriety, equity, and piety! Oh if this were engraven upon your hearts, that ye might ſtudy that in this preſent world, which this precious grace and goſpel teaches us to do in it. Know ye not brethren, that all your pains in ſeeking heaven, are not about heaven itſelf immediately, but the way to it, which is holineſs, *without this no man ſhall ſee the Lord*: Ye need not ſeek the kingdom of glory, hope for it, and look for it; but ſeek grace and righteouſneſs in this world, and if ye obtain them, ye have not much to do, but to look for the bleſſed hope and Chriſt's glorious appearance to judgment: For if ye have ſought and got grace here, Chriſt will come with grace and glory at the day of his revelation. Will ye conſider that ye are redeemed by Chriſt; but from what is it, from hell only, and eternal death only? No, no, for we are *redeemed from all iniquity*, as well as the *curſe of the law* and *the wrath to come*, Matth. i. 21. Tit. ii. 14. This deliverance from ſin is the greater and beſt half of our redemption. Conſider alſo to what ye are redeemed; Is it to happineſs and glory only? No certainly, but unto grace alſo: " For Chriſt " gave himſelf for us, that he might purify us unto " himſelf, a peculiar people zealous of good works." Theſe things ſhould miniſters, teach, and exhort, and above all things preſs them upon mens conſciences. " We are redeemed from all our enemies " to ſerve God without fear, in holineſs and righ-

teouſneſs

" teouſneſs all the days of our life," *Luke* i. 74, 7
Yea glory is not glory, except it be complete grac
ſo we muſt call the kingdom of glory: If ye be
lieved that it was nigh you, ye would look then fo
the perfection of grace, and will ye not love th
beginning of it here?

But this is not all, there is yet more here to com
fort us, *ſeek the righteouſneſs of God.* There is
righteouſneſs of God by faith, manifeſted in th
goſpel for loſt ſinners, who have nothing to cove
them: Now I ſay, ye muſt ſo ſeek inherent grace
as ye may not make it your covering, and the only
foundation of your confidence. Sinners, the thing
which ye firſt ſeek and find, is to be clothed with
God's righteouſneſs, that he may ſee no iniquity
within you; and then let it be your daily ſtudy
henceforth to be adorned and made all glorious
within, with grace and holineſs: Ye muſt firſt re-
nounce all your own righteouſneſs, and then be
clothed with the robes of God's righteouſneſs; ye
muſt ſtill renounce it, that grace may appear as the
gift of God, and not yours; as his beauty, not
your ornament. If ye be imperfect in your own
righteouſneſs, comfort yourſelves in the righteouſ-
neſs of God made yours by faith, that worketh by
love and purifies your hearts; for ſays the Apoſtle
Gal. iii. 16, 17. though *we are not juſtified by the
works of the law, but by the faith of Chriſt*, yet
we muſt keep ourſelves from every wicked thing,
and perfect holineſs in the fear of God; for if
*while we ſeek to be juſtified by Chriſt, and we our-
ſelves be found ſinners*, impenitent and impure, *Is
therefore Chriſt the miniſter of ſin? God forbid.*

SERMON

SERMON XIX.

Matth. vi. 33. *Seek firſt the kingdom of God,* &c.

IT may ſeem ſtrange, that when ſo great things are allowed, and ſo ſmall things are denyed, that we do not ſeek them, the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs are great things indeed, great not only in themſelves, but greater in compariſon of us. The things of this world even great events, are but poor, petty and inconſiderable matters, when compared with theſe; yet he graciouſly allows a larger meaſure of theſe great things relating to his kingdom, and righteouſneſs than of theſe leſſer things, he hath promiſedto give his people, and he commands us to ſeek after theſe greateſt things, "Seek firſt the "kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all "theſe things ſhall be added unto you."

This indeed is moſt ſuitable to his Majeſty, and to us alſo; it is moſt becoming his royal Majeſty when he is to declare his magnificence, and to vent his love, to give ſuch high and eminent expreſſions of it: A kingdom is a fit expreſſion of a king's love and good-will. Kings cannot give empires, unleſs they unking themſelves; but Chriſt is the *King of kings*, and hath prepared a kingdom for them that love him. It is a glorious declaration of God's excellent name, *that he is good to all, kind even to the evil and unthankful. His tender mercies are over all his works. The whole earth is full of his riches*, and the wretched poſterity of *Adam* have the largeſt ſhare of his goodneſs, even ſince the firſt defection from him: Nay but there are other things prepared and laid up for them that ſeek him; *O how great is that goodneſs! How excellent is that loving-kindneſs!*

Pſal.

Pſal. xxxi. 19, 20. Pſal. xxxvi. 5, 10. theſe things have not yet entered into the heart of men to conſider; if ye could ſpeak the mind of it, then the tongue could expreſs it; if ye could apprehend the wonders of it, then the heart could conceive it, but this the ſcripture denies, *Iſa.* lxiv. 4. "For ſince "the beginning of the world, men have not heard, "nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye "ſeen, O God, beſides thee, what he hath pre- "pared for them that waiteth for him:" Or as *Paul* writes, "Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither "have entered into the heart of man, the things "which God hath prepared for them that love him. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spi- "rit, who ſearcheth all things, even the deep things "of God," &c. 1 Cor. ii. 7---14. Is not a kingdom a gift ſuitable to ſuch a Giver? And is not this kingdom of God every way like himſelf? Theſe things are prepared by Chriſt, and there is no more to do, *but to give to him that aſks*, and *he that ſeeks ſhall find.* This righteouſneſs *divine, human*, is it not wholly of God's finding out? Is it ſo glorious, ſo excellent, as to hide the greateſt ſpots of the creation from his ſpotleſs eyes? *For even hell itſelf is naked before him, and deſtruction hath no covering*; even the *heavens are not pure in his ſight, he chargeth his angels with folly*, Job xxvi. 6 chap. iv. 17, 18, 19. chap. xv. 14---17. When all the creatures could not procure the ſalvation of ſinful men, when the *depth* ſaid, *it is not in me*, and the *ſea* ſaid, *it is not with me*, and the *heavens* and *heights* ſaid ſo too; even angels could not redeem us, the *redemption of the ſoul was ſo precious, that it would have ceaſed for ever*, if divine Wiſdom had not found it out, and Almighty power brought it to paſs. *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldeſt not; but a body haſt thou prepared for me:*

o I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart, Pſal. xl. 6, 7, 8. Heb. x. 5---11. All this was with God, and he knew the way thereof; Chriſt framed this royal robe of his righteouſneſs, by ſuffering and death, which may cover all our nakedneſs: He came and ſought the human nature with all its infirmities, *He became in all things like unto us, ſin only excepted. On him God laid our iniquities---For he himſelf bare our ſins in his own body*, when he was ſlain upon the croſs or tree, *that we being dead unto ſin might live unto righteouſneſs*, 1 Pet. ii. 24. 2 Cor. v. 21. Behold what a wonder! iniquities, and our iniquities laid upon the immaculate Lamb Jeſus Chriſt. Our Redeemer hid his divinity, his holineſs, and his innocence, as a vail and covering from the eyes of God's awful juſtice; *He ſmites the Shepherd*, his beloved Son, as he did the rebel creature: *It pleaſed the Father to bruiſe him and put him to grief, when his ſoul was made an offering for ſin*, Iſa. liii. 4---11. Zech. xiii. 7. Juſtice did not look through the covering to his innocence, but reckoned and numbered him among tranſgreſſors, when he bore the puniſhment of our ſins, and made an atonement for them, Iſa. liii. 11, 12. Gal. iii. 13, 14.

Now hence it is that the righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, which he learned in the days of his fleſh, and purchaſed by his death is prepared for us, to put on, *Whoſoever will, let him come and take it*; empty yourſelves ſtripped naked of all kind of coverings, but ſin and unworthineſs, that which God's holy eye cannot behold, and ſeek Chriſt's righteouſneſs to adorn and cover you; behold it ſhall hide all your ſins and abominations, of whatſoever nature and degree, from the pure and unſpotted

ſpotted eyes of God's juſtice, which are as a flam
ing fire, to conſume what it cannot look upon with
out abhorrence: Put on this righteouſneſs of God
and juſtice ſhall not draw by the covering, to loo
under it. It ſhall look upon the ſinner as a righte
ous man, on the ſlave of Satan as a child of God
on the heir of hell as the heir of heaven; if he ſin
cerely repent of, and forſake his ſins, believe i
Chriſt and obey his goſpel, *Behold all things ar
new; and all things are of God, who hath reconcile
the world unto himſelf by Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. 2 Cor. v
17, 18, 19. Col. i. 19---24. Chriſt was no worſ
dealt with for our ſins, than we ſhall be well deal
with for his righteouſneſs: This is the gift of God
and is it not worthy to be ſought? Is it not a gif
worthy for him to give? Is it not alſo ſuitable fo
us to aſk? *If thou kneweſt the gift of God, and wh
it is that ſaith to thee, Give me to drink; thou
wouldeſt have aſked of him, and he would have give
thee living water*, &c. John iv. 10--15. So ſay
to you, if ye knew the gift of God, what this king
dom is! what this righteouſneſs is! and who i
appointed by God to be the treaſure-houſe of al
fulneſs, to be communicated to us; ye would cer
tainly aſk of him the water of life, ye would ſurel
ſeek this kingdom of God and his righteouſneſs.
He doth not value other things, God only hath
theſe things offered in the goſpel, in choice o
many, therefore are they laid up for ſome few
whom he makes his peculiar treaſure, and jewels
Mal. iii. 17. *Exod.* xix. 5, 6. If ye knew a mo
narch that was a poſſeſſor of all this habitable world
and was about to expreſs his ſingular affection to
wards ſome perſons, if his kingdom or the half o
whole of it was not ſufficient, to be a token of it
but he had found out ſome other thing, and laid it
up for him and diſtributed the kingdom, the lands
and

d cities among others, certainly ye would think, at behoved to be ſome ſtrange thing of great price. the Lord was pleaſed to give you abundance of things here, make you all great, rich, and honourable perſons, then many would ſeek no other expreſſion of his love, they would think he d well enough to them: But alas, what is it all! eſteems it ſo little, that he often caſts it to ſwine, profane and wicked world. *He fills their belly ith his hid treaſure*, Pſal. xvii. 14. *He makes his to ſhine, and his rain to fall on the evil and the d*, Matth. v. 55. It is a demonſtration that it is a baſe thing, when it is ſo common, I mean in mpariſon of the portion of his ſaints; for though eſe worldly things are good in themſelves, yet y are not precious, they are not pearls: Would caſt pearls before dogs and ſwine? The honourle man's brutiſhneſs and ignorance of God, may monſtrate to you he cares not for it: *The moſt ghruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to omſoever he will*, and ſometimes *ſetteth up over the baſeſt of men*, Dan. iv. 13---18. If God loved hes well, do ye think he would give them ſo lirally, and heap them up upon ſome baſe covetus wretches? Surely no; but here is the precious ing that is laid up and treaſured, the world and gain ſeems great, and big in your eyes, ye cant imagine more, nor wiſh for more. But alas! w low and baſe ſpirits have ye! it is but as the nghill that the ſwine feed on, or the huſks which e prodigal deſired to feed his belly with, when began to be in want, *Luke* xv. 13---17. So are mens worldly pleaſures, preferments, and pros. But here are ſome particular things, that only ſerve to be called good, namely, the *kingdom of ds* and *his righteouſneſs*; and when God had arched the whole world (to ſpeak with reverence

of his glorious Majeſty, who needs not enquire in
to ſecret things) when he had looked through a
the works of his hand, he ſets theſe apart from a
the reſt, to be given to the men whom the Kin
ſhall honour. This kingdom is the ſubſtance, an
accompliſhment of Heaven's eternal counſel, an
purpoſe of grace which was given in Chriſt befo
the world, and it is the end of the Son's redemptio
of a ſinful world, and his interceſſion for them
God's right hand: *Father*, (ſays he, Joh. xvii. 24
*I will that theſe whom thou haſt given me, be with m
where I am, that they may behold the glory which th
haſt given me*; and for other things he makes the
as the ſtones of the field.

Now I ſay, as this kingdom of God and his rig
teouſneſs, are ſuitable expreſſions of his love, a
cording to his magnificence, ſo they are alſo ſuit
to our condition and neceſſities. No queſtion but
would permit us to ſeek great things in this wor
if theſe things were really great and good, and
they did become ſuch great immortal ſpirits as
have, your ſouls are above all theſe things; but t
kingdom and this only, is above the ſoul: No
then, if ye go out to ſeek theſe earthly things,
muſt go down from the throne of eminency, th
God hath ſet your ſouls upon by creation, and ab
your ſpirits by ſtooping to the very duſt of yo
feet, to embrace theſe things; and, which is wor
ye put yourſelves out of that high throne of dig
ty that ye are exalted to by Chriſt's redemptio
which we may call a ſecond creation. Jeſus decl
ed by the infinite ranſom he gave, "when he
"fered himſelf a ſacrifice without ſpot to Go
Heb. ix. 14. and *laid down his life for us*, what
worth of your ſouls was: "None of them (ſa
"the Pſalmiſt) can by any means redeem his b
"ther, nor give to God a ranſom for him;
"

" the redemption of their ſoul is precious, and it " ceaſeth for ever," Pſal. xlix 6--10. Call and aſſemble all the creatures in heaven and earth; ſummon gold, ſilver, precious ſtones, houſes, cities, kingdoms, places of truſt and dignity, great learning and parts, and every other thing ye can imagine, let them all convene in a parliament, and conſult how men ſhall be ranſomed; all of them combined together, though they make one purſe, cannot do it, they cannot pay the leaſt farthing: The Lord Jeſus Chriſt then ſtepped in here, *Lo, I come*, I give the body thou gave me, my life for theirs, *I delight to do thy will, thy law is in my heart.*

Are your ſouls then exalted to ſuch great dignity! Is ſuch a price ſet upon them, and will ye ſpend them for that which could not pay the price for them, *for that which profiteth not*? Ye muſt go out of yourſelves to ſeek happineſs: Then I pray you, go not downward, it is not there, but miſery is there; and by going down to the creatures, ye have found it, and cannot loſe it to this day: But the kingdom of God is the only thing above, go up to it, Seek theſe *things that are above*. Col. iii. 1, 2, 3, 4. " If then ye be riſen with Chriſt, thro' " the faith of God's operation. Set your affection " on things above, where Chriſt ſitteth at God's " right hand, and not on things on the earth." Theſe things are but great in your apprehenſion; if they are at all great indeed, it is only in evil: if then ye ſeek great things for yourſelves, ye may find evil things; ye ſhall certainly find ſuch evil things, as ſhall drown you in everlaſting deſtruction. " They that will be rich (in worldly things) " who lay up treaſures for themſelves, and are not " rich towards God, fall into temptation, and a " ſnare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful luſts

" which drown men in perdition. For the love o
" money is the root of all evil, which while ſom
" coveted after, they have erred from the faith, an
" pierced themſelves through with many ſorrows,
1 *Tim.* vi. 9. 10. Great things in this world are no
always good; to ſeek them, makes them certainl
evil and hurtful, it is not ſo hurtful to have them
though very dangerous, but it is hurtful, yea pre
ſent ruin to ſeek: But here is a kingdom that
great, and great in goodneſs, every way anſwerabl
to our neceſſities, this is the kingdom we ſhoul
ſeek above all things.

We would therefore beſeech you to be wanter
in yourſelves, and ſeekers in Chriſt; and ſeeker
ye cannot be, till ye be wanters, and finders y
cannot be, except, if ye ſeek in Jeſus all ſatisfactio
and remedy of your neceſſity: This is even th
very nature of a Chriſtian, his chief exerciſe an
employment. What then is a Chriſtian's principa
ſtudy, his great buſineſs, his important calling, an
what is his ſucceſs in it? He is a ſeeker by his em
ployment, or calling here, and he ſhall certainl
find what he aſks. But what puts him to ſeeking
The diſcovery of his own emptineſs, and God
fulneſs; therefore ſtudy theſe things moſt, if y
would be Chriſtians in truth and in deed. It is the
two, that ye muſt ſtill paſs between, if ye kee
them not both in your view at once, ye canno
well perceive any of them, either comfortably, hum
bly, or profitably.

This is even the ſum of Chriſtianity; look wha
ye want in yourſelves, and make up that in God
diſcover your own emptineſs and fill it up wit
God's fulneſs: *The liberal ſoul ſhall be made fa
and he that watereth, ſhall be watered alſo himſel*
Prov. xi. 25. Be not niggards here, be liberall
minded, both in ſeeking and receiving; ſo ſha
y

ye pleaſe him beſt who counts it his glory to give: *The inſtruments of the churl are evil, but the liberal deviſeth liberal things, and by liberal things he ſhall ſtand,* Iſa. xxxiii. 7, 8. Seek anſwerable to your own neceſſity, and God's All-ſufficiency, and know no other rule or meaſure.

Now Chriſtians, this is your calling and employment here, to be ſeekers of God's kingdom and righteouſneſs: But ſhall we come ſpeed? Yes certainly; it is ſo far put out of queſtion here, that it needs not be expreſſed: *Seek firſt the kingdom of God, and all theſe things ſhall* be ſuperadded to you, he thinks it needleſs to ſay, and ye ſhall find the kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs; for it is ſuppoſed as a thing unqueſtionable, and he adds theſe words, *and all theſe things ſhall be added to you,* to anſwer the faithleſneſs of theſe who could not credit him in temporal things, though they had concredited to him their immortal ſouls. Ye do not doubt then, but ye ſhall have the kingdom of heaven, ye do indeed ſeek it, many by ſeeking kingdoms loſeth here, by ſeeking to make them more ſure, they loſe the hold they have; many by aſpiring to greater things, loſe theſe things they have, and themſelves too: But here is the man that is only ſure of ſucceſs, that may reckon upon his advantage before he take pains, if indeed he reſolves to take pains for it. This one thing is made ſure, *eternal life*; if ye lay hold on it here by faith, and quit your hold of preſent things *that end in death,* Rom. vi. 21. We may well ſubmit to the uncertainty of all other things, as *David* who held himſelf well ſatisfied with the *everlaſting covenant God had made with him, which was well ordered in all things and ſure,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Though the kingdom and houſe go, it matters not, if he keep this faſt; if he take not away his loving-kindneſs, this is all my comfort, my joy and my deſire. Comfort

yourselves with this, amidst the manifold calamities and revolutions of times; ye see no man can promise himself immunity, or freedom from common judgments: Here ye have *no continuing city*, why then do ye not *seek one to come*, and comfort yourselves in the hope of it. Your rights and heritable securities will not secure your lands, and riches for any considerable time; therefore seek an eternal and sure inheritance, sure mercies: seek that which ye cannot miss, and having found, cannot lose; nothing here can you expect either to find, or keep when ye have found it.

But besides all this, there is an accession to this inheritance all needful things shall be added, ye shall want no good thing, *Psal.* lxxxiv. 11. Will not all this double gain and advantage, recompense, yea, overcome all the labours of seeking? Shall I not drive away the remembrance of them? Here then is the most compendious and comprehensive way to have your desires in this life granted, to get your necessities supplied: *Seek first the kingdom of God* and ye shall have them; but if ye seek these things and not heaven, ye shall want this kingdom. I think then it is all the folly and madness in the world, not to take this way, for it is the way to be blessed here and hereafter; and if we choose any other way, it brings no satisfaction here, and brings eternal misery hereafter. If ye would be wise in this world, seek heaven; do not think that ye should have heaven, or seek God's kingdom from this sordid principle, that ye shall have all worldly things given you, which God pleaseth to bestow for no man can seek the kingdom of heaven aright but he that seeks it for itself: Yet if there were more to proclaim the madness of men, this would sufficiently suffice; all they can desire or expect promised with the kingdom, and yet they will not seek it.

SERMO

SERMON XX.

1 Pet. iv. 7. *But the end of all things is at hand, be ye therefore ſober and watch unto Prayer.*

IF ye would aſk what ye ſhould do till Chriſt come again, or what ſhould be your exerciſe and employment in this old age of the world, here ye have it in a word, *be ſober, and watch unto prayer.* When Chriſt was to go away to his Father, and leave his diſciples in this world, as he left them not orphans, or comfortleſs, without the comforter, ſo neither left he them without counſel and direction; the word he left to them was *take heed, watch and pray,* Mark xiii. 33. In this chapter *Peter* is mindful of his Lord's direction, as *Paul* alſo was, 1 *Theſſ.* v. 6. The ſubſtance of this chapter is to exhort Chriſtians to a holy converſation, ſuitable to their high calling. He preſſes mortification in general, from that which ſhould be of greateſt force with a believer's heart, the ſtrongeſt and moſt convincing reaſon in the world, union with Chriſt crucified, even as *Paul* does *Rom.* vi. and then in the 3d and 4th verſes, he argues from their former converſation, ye have ſinned enough already, all the reſt of your time is over little to conſecrate to God; according then as ye have advanced Satan's kingdom while under it, ſo advance Chriſt's kingdom when it comes to you, and take that noble revenge upon yourſelves and ſins, ſo as to bring them both captive to the obedience of Chriſt: And although the world may think it ſtrange ye walk not with them, yet ſo much the rather ought ye to aſpire after a diſconformity to the world. Be then ambitious of being ſingular in the world, ye would lay down ſuch a

conclusion as this, I am a stranger, and will walk as a stranger, and ye need not think yourselves miserable to be out of so many company, and to be alone; no, if ye knew what were to come upon them, ye would get you out from among them, lest ye be partakers of their plagues: The day of the Lord is coming, and the world must give an account to the Judge of all flesh, ye may endure their mockings, and all the hard measure which ye get here for it shall be recompensed unto them. And your lot is the same that other saints had, who now sleep in the Lord; the gospel was preached unto them, and they had the same fruit of it before God, and got everlasting life by it, yet they were judged in the world as well as you, and were counted base and contemptible. Now in this verse he comes to particular exhortations, from the former reasons. This text hath two parts, *1st*, An exhortation to some special duties which are so conjoined in this form of speech, that they seem all but one duty; prayer is the duty, and sobriety and watchfulness are means to it. (2.) There is a reason given, *because the end of all things is at hand*; so then you have here the posture the world is in, and the posture a Christian should be in. This is the world's old age, it is declining, albeit it seem a fair and beautiful thing in the eyes of them who know no better, and unto them who are of yesterday and know nothing, it looks as if it had been created yesterday, yet the truth is, and a believer knows it is near the grave, gray hairs are here and there upon it, though many know it not; and Jesus the Lord is at hand to put an end to it: Now, what should be your condition in the mean time? What should immortal souls do that are to remain for ever, and outlive this habitable world? How should they be employed? The spirit and soul is to endure longer

longer than the man's poſſeſſions, goods, honour, and place; how then ſhould he look upon theſe things? Here it is, be ſober in the uſe of all things, uſe the world as if ye uſed it not, watch unto prayer. Ye are encompaſſed about with manifold temptations, therefore watch, and be as men on their way waiting for the Bridegroom; the bride's exerciſe ſince Chriſt aſcended unto heaven, ſhould be to ſay, *Lord Jeſus, come quickly.*

In diſcourſing upon this ſubject, we ſhall *1ſt*, ſpeak of theſe three parts of a Chriſtian's duty ſeverally. (2.) Conſider how they help one another, and ſo jointly ſpeak of them. And then (3.) Of the reaſon, and motive to them all, and how it enforces ſuch an exerciſe. As to the firſt of theſe we obſerve, That ſobriety is a duty becoming every Chriſtian that is united unto Jeſus Chriſt, and is ſeparated by God's holy calling from the reſt of the world: I add theſe two conſiderations, becauſe of the preceeding verſe; for in the firſt and ſecond verſes, he lays down an excellent ground of all kind of mortification, *viz.* the believer's union with Chriſt crucified, Jeſus Chriſt ſuffered and died for us, as a common Perſon, to ſuſtain the guilt of our ſins: He died as a Cautioner and Undertaker for us, and as our Head and King, and we by vertue of that, are obliged to crucify ſin alſo. In verſes 3d and 4th the other conſideration is ſet down; there ought to be a vaſt difference between the believer now, and before his converſion; he ſhould not be the ſame man, but as *Paul* ſays, *I am crucified with Chriſt, nevertheleſs I live, yet not I, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20. He ſhould be ſeparated from the world, that all the world may wonder at him, and think it ſtrange to ſee his converſation. Now I conceive this exhortation is gathered from both theſe, and the word of reference therefore relates to the preceeding

ceeding verſe, as well as his reaſon in the words now read, now therefore be ſober; This ſobriety is not limited to meat, drink, or apparel, the object of it is more comprehenſive in ſcripture; it uſes ſometimes to be expreſſed ſingly, without making mention of any particular matter, evidently importing, that ſobriety ought to be in all things, that which we ought to be ſober in, is certainly the all things ſpoken of, in the reaſon of ſobriety, whoſe end is at hand. They are moſt diſtinctly expreſſed 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17. "All that is in the world, "the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eye, and the "pride of life;" all that periſhes is not of the Father, but of the world, that is the world which wicked men frame to themſelves: Here then is a large commentary on all things. Therefore whatever is in the world is the matter of ſobriety, whatever comes under the ſenſes calls for ſobriety; whatever comes under the object of the mind is the matter of ſobriety; nay, whatever is corruptible and periſhing, or whatever the laſt day of the Lord's coming ſhall put an end to, in all theſe there muſt be ſobriety exerciſed. There is a threefold ſobriety, (1.) Sobriety in the mind, or ſobermindedneſs, Rom. xii. 3. "We ought not to think "more highly of our ſelves than we ought to think, "but to think ſoberly." 1 Cor. iv. 6, 7. Tit. ii. 6. Rom. xi. 20. 1 Cor. viii. 2. Sobriety of mind is that excellent leſſon that Chriſt Jeſus both taught, and practiſed in his humble ſtate, learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, *Matth.* xi. 29. Humility is not like *Peter*, "Depart from me, for I "am a ſinful man O Lord Lord, thou ſhalt never "waſh my feet:" But humility is rather like *Mary*, that ſat down at Chriſt's feet, and waſhed them with tears. Sobriety of mind does not undervalue God's gifts and graces, neither doth it overvalue them;

them; it thinks of itſelf according to the meaſure of grace freely given, Rom. xii. 3. and ſobriety looks on all its own gifts and ornaments, as not its own but another's, as free gifts, and therefore it puffs not up a man againſt his neighbour, though he ſhould ſee a gift given beyond his neighbour; high-mindedneſs is like the high bending of a ſtring of an inſtrument, which eaſily breaks in two pieces: Sobriety walks with a low ſail, and creeps through under the wind; but the high mind is like the cedar, that moves with the wind, and falls when the bowing twig ſtands ſtill. Some will think the aſpiring of the ſpirit, a ſign of a better ſpirit than the humble mind, and ſo looks down upon others; but oh, if they walk ſafely, they will walk humbly with God.

2*dly*, There is alſo ſobriety in the affections, when they are moderate; the objects of this world which come under the affections, are either ſinful and unlawful, or in themſelves lawful and allowable: Now ſobriety towards the firſt kind is ſimple abſtinence, towards the ſecond moderation. The rule of the firſt is, *abſtain from fleſhly luſts which war againſt the mind*, 1 Pet. ii. 12. And as it was ſaid in another ſenſe, "touch not, taſte not, handle not, "have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of "darkneſs," Eph. v. 11. As a man who would be clean ſhould not touch pitch, and he who would not be burnt, ſhould not carry coals in his boſom, ſo ſhould the child of God, who walked formerly in the luſts of ignorance, after the cuſtom of this world, he ought to abſtain from all appearance of evil, 1 Theſſ. v. 21. not only from ſin itſelf, but from all the occaſions of it, and inducements unto it, all that which hath any appearance of evil. There is no meaſure of moderation here, a man muſt not think to give his luſts part, and Chriſt part, no,

no, he muſt have all or none; no quarters with ſin ye ſhould be out of ſpeaking terms with it: The leaſt motion of the affections and heart that way is inſobriety, and inordinate affections. (2.) But ſobriety in things lawful is moderation, when the ſpirit is kept within bounds, Col. iii. 1, 2. and the rule of this is that which *Paul* preſcribes 1 Cor. vii. 29. "Uſe the world as not abuſing it, knowing that "the faſhion of the world doth paſs away:" Love this world as if ye loved it not. Every thing hath too much of the heart, and Jeſus Chriſt would have his royal palace, his peculiar place here; he may have ſuitable affections to God's diſpenſations in this world, (for the Chriſtian wants none of his ſenſes) yet he ought not to be greatly moved, as *David* ſpeaks, Pſal. lxii. 2. Now we conſider this in three things, (1.) In ſeeking of any thing. (2.) In enjoying of any thing. (3.) In loſing or wanting any thing. That rule of *Paul's* may be applyed to all the three, he ſhould ſeek the world as if he ſought it not; he ſhould enjoy the world as if he enjoyed it not, he ſhould want or loſe the world as if he loſt it not. This ſobriety makes him want in abundance, and abound in want; to have nothing, and yet poſſeſs all things. All our time and pains, and affections are ſpent out upon theſe, and turns about on theſe three points; deſire attended with care and anxiety goes out to fetch in any thing that the mind fancies; when the ſoul hath gotten its deſire, it delights and rejoices in it, and when it is fruſtrated, diſappointed or croſſed, it grieves and torments itſelf: If ye find a Chriſtian ſober in theſe, you find his pulſe beat well. (1.) Ye ſhould then ſeek the world or any thing, as if ye ſought it not. We are given to idolize the creatures, and dig broken ciſterns, and forſake the fountain of living waters, to ſeek the creature as if it were God, and

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the ſtrength of affections uſes to be ſpent on it. Men have big and large apprehenſions of the things of this world, and are like fooliſh children amazed with pictures and dreams; fancy buſks up and adorns the object with all things ſuitable, and thus the poor ſoul is put in expectation of ſomething, and ſtretcheth out itſelf to the utmoſt of its ability, to purchaſe that which being had, will not ſatisfy. The world promiſes fair to deluded minds that know no better; but the child of God muſt be ſober here, he ought to have a low eſtimation of all created things, and conclude all under vanity and vexation of ſpirit, Luke x. 41, 42. Sobriety ſo ſeeks, that it cannot want, becauſe it ſeeks a better thing that it cannot miſs; but the poor worldling ſeek this world as his only thing, and if he want it, what hath he more? He muſt have it, or elſe he hath nothing; the child of God ſhould ſeek as a rich man that is ſatisfied, and needs no more, that he cares not whether he obtain or not: the worldlings ſeek it as their portion, their heart and affections are on it, but he ſeeks it not as his portion, but as acceſſory to his inheritance, *Matth.* vi. 33. Again we obſerve, (2.) That the good man uſes the world, and enjoys it, as if he enjoyed it not; when riches increaſes, he ſets not his heart on them: He is dead to the world, and crucified to it, it is but an unpleaſant thing to him, and he to it. He can be refreſhed with his meat more than another, becauſe he ſees God and his love in it; yet he hath it not as his portion, he is not exceſſive in gladneſs for any diſpenſation caſt in the balance, one kind of diſpenſation or other; that which would make another man think he was half in heaven, or half in hell, it will not add much moment and weight to ſuch a ſpirit, it is but like the caſting in of a feather in a great balance, that will ſcarcely incline it

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to either ſide. (3.) He loſes or wants the world, as if he loſt it not; that which would break another man's heart, ſobriety will make him go light under it, and not be much diſquieted for any thing; why, what is the matter of it, can it trouble his peace or acceſs to God? Can his portion be removed? What then ſhould ail him, for the light of God's countenance is more recompenſe than all the world. Proceed we now to apply this in ſome uſes.

Uſe 1. It diſcovers unto the moſt part of men how little they are advanced in Chriſtianity: Many are inſober in the uſe of the world, and what muſt their affections be? The works of darkneſs that become not the children of God, nor the children of the day, are yet common in the viſible church: Inſobriety in many is palpable, and written on their forehead, that beaſtly ſin of drunkenneſs abounds in many congregations. But (2.) We would even convince the Lord's own children of great ſhortcoming in this duty: Although your carriage before men might paſs free of cenſure of inſobriety, yet O! how many things will God put ſuch a conſtruction on? There are many ſaints that cannot walk ſoberly in the uſe of this world, they ſpend their time upon it, and this is inſobriety; ſcarce can prayer and communion with God get an hour in the day from their calling, and when ye have to ſpend, inſobriety is written upon many paſſages of your behaviour. Your meat, and drink, and clothing ſhould declare, that ye are waiting for a better inheritance; but oh! how are your affections wedded unto this preſent world? The current and ſtream of many of your thoughts goes this way, What ſhall I eat or drink? Or what ſhall I put on for clothing? And ye ſpend your ſpirits in projecting, and in following out your projects; there are ſome evident demonſtrations of inſobriety in the affections,

affections, for (1.) Moſt of your thoughts run upon temporal things; and certainly if your hearts were not in this world, your minds would follow your hearts. Chriſtians, too many amongſt you ſpend whole days, and never any object enters into your minds, but one thing of the world after another; your minds are high-ways for the travellers of this world to come through: It may be ye will ſteal an hour, or half an hour for prayer, but the reſt of your converſation is not in heaven, but void of God; according as every hour furniſhes new opportunities, ſo are your minds here, Phil. iii. 20. And meditation upon ſpiritual things, that is the nerves and ſinews of religion, that is a rare thing. If your affections were not more upon this world, than upon Chriſt Jeſus, would not our Saviour be uppermoſt in your thoughts? Would not Chriſt interrupt your thoughts of the world? Would not heaven come in the midſt of your buſineſs, and get a ſpare look and ejaculation? The world uſes to interrupt your thoughts of God, and the mind is given to wander in prayer; but put you upon ſomething temporal, ye can fix your heart as long as you pleaſe, and never wander: *David* was not ſo, he awaked, and was ſtill with God, he meditates upon him in the night watches, he remembers him day and night, Pſal. lxiii. 8. and this made him a lively Chriſtian. But (2.) If ye be ſeeking any thing, ye ſeek it ſo, as inſobriety is ſtamped upon it; your ſeeking of the world is prejudicial to your ſeeking of God, and takes away much time for prayer; ye will be ſo eager in the purſuit of a momentary paſſing vanity, as ever ye were in the ſeeking of God, Col. iii. 1, 2. Care and anxiety comes in to be your proviſion, and ye put not prayer in the place of it, to make your requeſts known unto God; ye ſeek it as if it were your portion

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and inheritance, ſurely this is in ſobriety. (3.) Look upon your affections toward preſent enjoyments, and are ye ſober? Ye can delight in theſe things, and take the ſweetneſs of them, but the conſolations of God are a ſmall thing to you; any thing adds to your joy and lifts you up, albeit ye be not in good terms with God, yet ye can take your pleaſure in the world: Ye ſee not a worm and moth in your pleaſures, ye are not afraid to fill your belly with honey. Some think themſelves made up when they get ſuch a lot; but ſaints are ye ſober, when ſuch a thing changes your condition? O but the children of God look upon this world as *David* did in his fretting condition, Pſal. xxxviii. and in his proſperous condition, Pſal. xxx. ye ſit down and ſay, *My mountain ſtands ſtrong, and I ſhall never be moved*; ye have more delight in your outward lot than ever ye had in Jeſus Chriſt. But (4.) When any outward thing goes croſs to your mind, then your inſobriety appears: The taking of a ſad and croſs diſpenſation will evidence how ye ſought the world. the taking away of a friend or idol, will declare ye idolized it. As the ſaints have too longing deſires for the things of this world, and look upon them as the paradiſe of God, not as *Paul* did, who thought the world a dead thing; ſo remove any thing that ye enjoy, and your joy is taken from you: Give ſomething to pray your ſorrow is away and ye can no more mourn for ſin, and take ſomething away and your joy is gone, ye cannot delight in God: Ye vex and diſquiet yourſelves in vain, and are weighed down with it. Are ye not then under the feet of this preſent world, when it tramples upon you? Are ye not ſervants unto it when your condition altereth and changeth according to the nod of outward things? Ye may know what puts you up and down, that commands you, and this is not

obriety: Ye are drunk with the creature, the child f God ſhould be like mount *Zion*, that can never e moved. Therefore,

3*dly*, We would exhort all the ſaints to ſtudy ore ſobriety in this world; we need no more exortation than what *Paul* gives, 1 Cor. vii. 29. It a ſtrange language, ſaints, *Set not your affections on the things of this earth, but on the things which re above*, Col. iii. 1, 2. *Love not the world, nor e things of the world*, &c. 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17. e ought to ſtudy ſuch a walk abſtracted from this orld, that ye might be as ſtrangers at home, as ojourners in your own country; the child of God hould ſit down in his own family among his chilren, as if he were abroad; and he ought to be broad as if he were home: Wherefore is your life alled a pilgrimage, and ye ſtrangers? Engage not uch your heart to any thing of this world; take ut a ſtanding drink and be gone, ye may not lay own your ſtaff and burden that his may bear you ight. (1.) Conſider that inſobriety is idolatry; inobriety puts the creature in God's place, and ſoriety puts all things in their own place. When a an's heart or affections are ſet on any thing, that s his idol and his maſter; and Chriſt ſays, *Ye cannot ſerve God and mammon*, Matth. vi. 24. *theſe two aſters*. Sure the worldling thinks not that he deires his riches, yet Chriſt puts that conſtruction pon his loving them well; Chriſt calls any thing hat is a man's maſter his god; now any thing hat the heart goes after is a man's maſter, that which commands a man's affections, commands the whole man, for the affections are the man's maſter, nd they command the man. If ye knew this ye would be afraid of ſpending your hearts upon vaity; ye put that vanity in the place of Jeſus Chriſt, nd ſo your heart is a temple of idols, and the great

goſpel-promiſe Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. hath not gotten place in you: The due place of the creature is to be ſubſervient to the Lord its Maker, to be only the footſtool, that he may have the throne; true, inſobriety puts the creature upon the throne, and worſhips it. (2.) Inſobriety of love to the world hinders the love of God; as much as is added to the one, is taken from the other, 1 John ii. 15. If the love of the world have one grain weight of allowance more than Chriſt ſpeaks of, that is incompatible with the love of the Father. The creature will ſuffer a parting of affection, and will be content with a ſhare, like the harlot and falſe mother that would be content with the divided child; but God muſt have all or none, and will not ſhare with the creature; ye may find it by experience when your hearts have been much ſet upon any thing in this world, Chriſt Jeſus has not been ſo pleaſant to you, ye have not ſo much delighted in him; affection muſt run in the channel or it is but weak, if once ye divide the ſtreams, and much more here: The love of the world makes the heart carnal, it is the defilement of the whole ſoul, and a weight that eaſily beſets us, that it cannot mount up in a cloud of divine affection to Jeſus; Can the needle go to two contrary points both at once? Can it move to the north and the ſouth at the ſame time? Such an oppoſition is there between the Father, and the things of the world. If then ye turn your face on the creature, ye muſt turn your back upon God; think not Chriſtians to keep love entire to God, and to ſet your affections on the world. *Solomon's* backſliding had this falſe principle, he thought to retain his integrity, and his wiſdom ſhould abide with him, tho' he would try folly and madneſs, *Eccleſ.* vii. 23. but did he not grow more fooliſh? Did he retain his wiſdom? Many have come down from their excel-

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ſence by this preſumption (3.) Inſobriety is the world's ſin, it is the ſin of the days of your ignorance, when ye walked after the luſts of the *Gentiles*, and it is a ſhame for a child of God to be ſo; this duty is oppoſed to their former walking, verſes 3d and 4th. There ſhould be a great diſtance between you and the world, that ye may ſeem men of diverſe countries; though ye dwell in one city or in one houſe, ye ought ſo to walk as men may think it ſtrange, as it may be a wonder in the world. O but few Chriſtians give the worldly men occaſion to ſpeak of them for holineſs, few give them any ground for wondering at and mocking their converſation, your converſation is ſo like theirs, that they need not think any thing in it ſtrange; Is it not a ſhame ſaints, to be like *pagans?* Chriſt uſes ſuch an argument with his diſciples to diſſuade them from carnal carefulneſs, *Matth.* vi. 32. Sobriety is a work of the day, becoming a child of light, as *Paul* obſerves 1 *Theſſ.* v. 4--9. importing as much as if it were a ſhame for the Chriſtian to be found much in love with the world, as it is for a man to be drunk at nine in the morning and ſtaggering in the ſtreets: There ought to be as great a difference between you and the world, as there is between day and night, light and darkneſs: Since the true light hath ſhined, to diſcover a more excellent happineſs than the world can give, and ſince it hath concluded all under vanity, ye are not anſwerable to your holy calling to have it in any higher eſtimation. Conſider alſo, (4.) That the world is not your portion, your life conſiſts not in what you enjoy, your inheritance is above, reſerved in the heavens for you; therefore be ſober: If ye believed this, that one day ye ſhall put on white robes, and be clothed with immortality, would ye ſo purſue after the world? It is the world's portion

and let them who know no better ſeek it as their god, and love it as their inheritance; but fy upon believers, that have a hope laid up in heaven, and fixed as an anchor within the vail: Should ye cauſe your portion to be evil ſpoken of, by your groping ſo much after this preſent world? If ye walked right ye ſhould torment the world, and oblige them to be convinced that ye ſeek a city to come, and that ye deſpiſe all their enjoyments. But (5.) Inſobriety becomes not a reaſonable ſoul, and is very unbeſeeming a Chriſtian, even ſo is it to every man; *Are ye not better* (ſays Chriſt) *than many ſparrows? Is not the life more than meat?* Matth. vi. 25. Luke xii. 23, 24. So we may ſay, Is not the ſoul better than the periſhing creature? O it is the diſgrace and debaſement of an immortal ſpirit to be put under the feet of a piece of clay, to be ſubjected to vanity, and to the poor periſhing things of the world. If a man but knew himſelf, and his natural prerogative above the creatures, let be his Chriſtian privileges, he would deſpiſe the world, and think all that is in it not a ſatisfying portion for his ſpirit: He would count it a great diſparagement to lodge upon this ſide of infiniteneſs and divine fulneſs. Would ye not think it a baſe thing to ſee a king's ſon ſitting down among beggars, and puddling in the filth of the city: God made man to have lordſhip and preheminence over the creatures, and his ſpirit ſhall outlive all theſe things he ſees, and he looks to; and what a diſhonour muſt it be to ſpend an immortal ſpirit on vanity, to have no eye beyond the ſpan of time? As Chriſt ſaid, *What hath a man gained, if he loſe his own ſoul?* What gain ye in this world, tho' all things ſhould befal you according to your contentment, what gain ye, ſince ye proſtitute an immortal ſoul unto the ſervice of the world, and hath made the prince of the world and all things, ſervant and ſlave.

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SERMON XXI.

1 Pet. iv. 7. *And watch unto prayer.*

WATCH. A Chriſtian ſhould watch, a Chriſtian is a watchman by office; this duty of watchfulneſs is frequently commanded and commended in ſcripture, *Matth.* xxiv. 42. *Mark* xiii. 33. 1 *Cor.* xvi. 13. *Eph.* v. 6. 1 *Pet.* v. 8. *Col.* iv. 2. *Luke* xii. 37. *David did wait as they that did watch for the morning light.* The miniſters of the goſpel are ſtiled watchmen in ſcripture: and every Chriſtian ſhould be to himſelf as a miniſter is to his flock, he ſhould watch over himſelf: This imports the Chriſtian's condition in this world, and expreſſes his exerciſe in it. Watching is a military poſture, and inſinuates the Chriſtian's caſe in this world: (1.) He is compaſſed about with enemies, and therefore he muſt be a ſoldier, 2 Tim ii. 4. *Thou therefore endure hardneſs as a good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt.* The Chriſtian hath a warfare to accompliſh in this world, and therefore the church here is militant, and in heaven triumphant, 1 *Tim.* i. 18. Every Chriſtian ſhould *war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conſcience.* What is the reaſon that when Chriſt triumphed upon the croſs, and conquered all his enemies, and is aſcended on high that he hath not made all believers conquerors? Is he man that ſits with Chriſt in heavenly places, *Eph.* ii. 6. and he who was dead with Chriſt, and alſo riſen with him, is he yet a ſoldier when Chriſt hath overcome, and gotten the crown, and the believer hath he not the victory that Chriſt obtained? Why then is he put to fight any more, hath not Chriſt completely done it? Yes indeed, Chriſt hath overcome by his own ſtrength, *Col.* ii.

15. and is now on high, yet he will have the poor pieces of contemptible clay to overcome the *Archangel*, the immortal ſpirits. It was not ſo much for the prince *Gabriel*, the meſſenger of the covenant, the King of ſaints, to overcome his own creature, but he hath drawn out a battle and warfare to all his followers, that in the ſtrength of their victory in him already paſt they may be made more than conquerors; and there may be a perpetual ſong of triumph and victory in heaven, that he hath made the ſaints ſtrong, and hath made the ſtrong weak: *He hath ſet the poor with princes, and the kings on the dunghill.* The Chriſtian's heart and grace are like a beſieged city, that is blocked up upon every hand, there are enemies without, and falſe friends within; its party is great principalities and powers, &c. *Eph.* vi. 13. and theſe go about continually to ſpy a breach; in the city, what ſtrength can do, what policy can do, will not be wanting; all things of the world beſieges the heart and every ſenſe is a port to let the enemy in: All a man's negotiation and trading in the world, is as dangerous as the proclaiming a publick market in a town for the country, while the enemy is about it. There is a deſperate wicked heart within, that hath deceived many thouſands, and would ſurrender the city upon any occaſion: *Here are fleſhly luſts which war againſt the ſoul*, 1 Pet. ii. 11. temptation to ſin, and to unbelief; there is a heart within that can conceive and bring forth ſin, and needs no temptation, a heart within that can ſeduce temptation itſelf, but he follows the *Tempter*, and when to all that, a foreign power is added, Oh then, who can ſtand? Chriſt himſelf was tempted, but *Satan* found nothing in him, and had nothing in him; but when *Satan* comes he finds all in us, and we are like powder to conceive flame: We can even tempt our

ourſelves, as well as be tempted by another. The Chriſtian keeps a houſe that the enemy ſurrounds, and if he ſleep he will enter; he is here a pilgrim, and is not yet come home, yet he hath a foul and dangerous way to go through: He is like a ſervant that his Lord hath left, and given proviſion to, and is to come home when he pleaſes, *Mark* xiii. 33. *Matth.* xxiv. 32. if his maſter find him ſleeping, wo to him, this is his caſe; what then ſhould his exerciſe and poſture be? He ſhould be a watchman, (1.) Watching is oppoſed to ſecurity and ſleeping, *Mat.* xxiv. 42. *Mark* xiii 33. he muſt keep his eyes open, or elſe he is gone, 1 *Pet.* v. 8. be vigilant leſt the devil attack you. The ſluggard's deſtruction comes *as an armed man*, becauſe of his *little ſleep and little ſlumber*, Prov. vi. 10. and Prov. xx. 13. Security is the Chriſtian's night, when he ceaſes from his labour, and the adverſary does with him according to his pleaſure; but the Chriſtian is in a better condition when he is wreſtling with temptation and getting ſore blows: When he is at peace and dwells ſecurely, as the people of *Laiſh*, and troubles himſelf with nothing, but dreams over his days, but that is a decaying condition. (2.) To watch, is to obſerve all things, 1 *Sam.* iv. 13. *Luke* vi. 7. This is a ſpecial point of the watchman's duty, to let nothing paſs by without obſervation; whatever object would come in, aſk at it from whence, and whither. The heart is a high-way-ſide that all things travel through, if the Chriſtian then be not exact in this to know what comes in, and what is its errand, he may be ſurprized or he know; he ſhould obſerve all the motions of the enemy, and be well acquainted with all the ſubtilties of temptations, he muſt know his own ſpirit, or his thoughts; he ſhould alſo obſerve all the Lord's motions and dealings with his ſpirit. It concerns him alſo to know what

is his enemy, or friend; therefore the Christian should get upon the watch-tower of the word, and look through the prospect of faith round about him, that he may know what his spiritual condition is. But (3.) The watchman gives warning while it is seasonable, and the enemy far off, it raises the alarm, and all must be in readiness, so ought ye to be; come to Jesus Christ with all ye observe, inform the Captain of your salvation whose soldiers you are: It is best dealing with temptation far off, and resisting the first motions of sin, for when it comes near hand, it gets many friends within, and it is the watchman's part not to give his judgment of what he sees, but to report only; do not ye sit down to pass the sentence on any thing, whether it be good or evil, sin or not, but come unto Jesus, and let him speak, for oftentimes we reason according to flesh and blood. (4.) There must be no interruption in this watching; he must give diligent heed to it, *Mark* xiii 33 1 *Thes.* v. 6. It is a very laborious exercise for a Christian to watch; all his senses will be exercised by it; he must look up, and that stedfastly, he must stand, and when he hath done all to stand; when he hath overcome he must yet watch, lest he enter into temptation, he is in greater hazard after victory, than before, *Ezra* vi. 13. He must watch when he is come out of one temptation, lest he enter into another, the greatest disadvantage that armies have gotten, hath been after some victory, when they were secure, therefore we ought to give all diligence, and love not sleep, lest we come into poverty.

From what hath been said, we see how few are in a warlike posture against Satan; many serve under Satan's colours, and the strong man keeps the house, they watch not against him but for him, they fight for him, and not against him. Do not many Chri-

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ſtians in profeſſion, even watch for their ſin, how to encompaſs what they would be at? Many wait on all advantages to get their own hearts deſires; they watch againſt God's word, to hold out conviction: Theſe are the children of darkneſs, in whom the devil reigns. We alſo obſerve from this, (2.) That even the children of God are ſeldom found watching, there is much woful ſecurity among them, and this is the univerſal complaint, who of you walks as if ye were among enemies? Ye walk as if ye were in a peaceable city without gates, as the people of *Laiſh* who dwelt ſecurely; ye have no friend in all the world, and yet what unſpeakable negligence and ſleeping is there among you? The fleſh is ſo weak, that ye cannot watch but one hour for Chriſt: And O! but the intermiſſion of one hour's watching hath brought down many ſtrong ones. This made a breach upon *David* that could hardly be made up for ever again. From the words (3.) We obſerve, that prayer is a part of a good Chriſtian's exerciſe; we may be aſhamed to ſpeak or hear of this duty. It is true indeed our religion is all compendized in this duty, yet this duty is ſo little in practice, that our religion muſt be but little. We would then ſpeak ſomewhat of prayer, and obſerve,

1*ſt*, That it is the diſtinguiſhing character of a Chriſtian in ſcripture; the child of God, and the man that calls upon God's name is all one, and the ſame thing: The wicked man's name is one that calls not upon God nor ſeeks him; but the godly call upon their Maker, *Acts* ix. 14. 1 *Cor.* i. 2. All the ſaints in ſcripture have been praying men. The wicked or natural man is not an indigent man, he wants nothing, and therefore ſeeks nothing from God; but the Chriſtian is one who hath nothing in himſelf, a beggar by birth, one that is caſt out into the open field, and he is ſtill ſeeking to make up his

his losses: Praying and wanting goes hand in hand together. Prayer then is the first breathing of the new man; what sign of life would ye know him by? Motion is an infallible sign of life, and this is the motion of the new creature. Prayer is the stirring of the soul, and going out of itself for bread, it is the sucking of the breasts of consolation; grace turns a man's face God-ward and Christ-ward. (2.) Prayer is the pouring out of an indigent man's heart in God's bosom; it is the emptying of the soul, and the landing of it on God's lee-shore, *Psal.* cii. 8. 1 *Sam.* i. 5. *Psal.* cxlii 2, &c. When a pious heart is overwhelmed and sore disquieted it prays; prayer emptieth the vessel, and brings the soul above the water again, it is a present ease in the time of trouble: Care and anxiety of spirit plunges the soul over the ears, but prayer brings it again into dry land, *Phil.* iv. 6. Care burns and drowns a man's requests, but prayer makes them known to God in every circumstance of life. Therefore prayer is called a *making known our requests unto God*, and *the lifting up of our souls unto God*, Psal. xxv. 1, 2. But (3.) Prayer is the provision of a soul, for it is sufficient to do that which carefulness and thoughtfulness undertakes to do, and effectuates not, *Phil.* iv. 6. Prayer does all a man's business, he lives by prayer, as *Paul lived by Christ living in him*, &c. Gal. ii. 20. he lived the natural life of a Christian by faith; so David says, *I gave myself unto prayer*, he opposes this unto all that his enemies do against him. Not only doth it ease the spirit of the present burden; but prayer does all his business, because it puts it over into a better hand, *viz.* the hand of him *who cares for us*, 1 Pet. v. 6. It is like a child who is under his father's tutory, and he does nothing himself, but all is done for him, and he needs to do no more but ask, and have,

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to ſeek and find, to knock and it ſhall be opened unto him: Prayer hath the promiſe of all ſpiritual and valuable bleſſings, and the promiſe is true. (4.) Prayer ſpeaks a life of indigence and dependence in the creature, and alſo ſpeaks out the attributes of God for the ſupply of all our need, ſovereignty, bounty, and good-will in God; it is the travelling of the poor creature between his own emptineſs, and God's all-ſufficient fulneſs: It acknowledges that he hath nothing, and that God hath all things he can deſire to make him happy. Prayer is an act of homage and ſubjection to our Creator, and it is alſo an act of love and reverence; for prayer looks upon God as a Lord, a Father and a Maſter. (5.) Prayer is the pulſe of a Chriſtian, and here ye may find him, if he be vigorous and frequent here, he is well; a decay in this, is a woful ſymptom of a dangerous and dwining condition: This is the fountain of the ſpirit of life, and the Spirit's breath, *For the Spirit helps our infirmities with groans which cannot be uttered*, Rom. viii. 26, 27. and according as the Spirit of God dwells in a man, in as far is he a good Chriſtian. If then ye would aſk how ye ſhould walk here, and thrive in true Chriſtianity, we would only ſay this, pray fervently and without ceaſing, pray and proſper, and daily be ſtrong, and the Lord ſhall be with you, he will never fail nor forſake you. Again conſider (6.) That prayer is not ſo much a duty, as a privilege, and if ſaints knew this, prayer would not ſo often be a burden unto them: is there any privilege like this? For prayer is an admiſſion into the ſecrets of God, it is an emptying of the heart into his boſom. It is a great part of our correſpondence with heaven; it is a ſwift meſſenger ſent thither, that never comes back with ill news: It never returns empty, but accompliſhes its intent. Prayer is as it were ſpeaking with God face

face to face, as a man ſpeaks to his friend; and is it not an honourable privilege, that believers are admitted to him, and may boldly come to him under all their neceſſities, and have ſuch a ſympathizing friend as Jeſus? What is wonderful in ſcripture, that God hath put that honour upon prayer to be inſtrumental in obtaining the greateſt bleſſings; did not the Lord at the prayer of *Moſes* dry up the red-ſea? Did he not at the prayer of *Elias* withhold and give rain? Did not the prayer of *Joſhua* make the ſun to ſtand ſtill, till he had vanquiſhed his enemies? Wherefore was all this? Ought he not to have done it unaſked? Certainly, but the Lord would put that honour and reſpect upon prayer in all ages, that it might be a demonſtration to all ages and generations, how ready and propenſe God was to hear prayer; nay, to ſpeak with reverence, God will ſubmit his own omnipotence to prayer: *Command, aſk of me, and command me*, ſays the high and holy One, Iſa. xlv. 11. O but *the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous avails much*, James v. 16. It does a man's buſineſs, and upon leſs expences; it gives a reward in the hand, and the hope of the things ſought. Withal, prayer is like *Jacob's* getting that within doors, without much toil, which careful *Eſau* goes about all the fields for, and toils all day to obtain. Prayer is the moſt compendious way of remedy of all things elſe, it always makes up loſſes either of the ſame kind, or better; for if the loſs be temporal, if the want be bodily, prayer makes it up with acceſs unto God, it pays in gold, if it give not the ſame coin, yet it is better.

We have ſpoken ſomething of prayer for this end, that your hearts may fall in love with it; it is the property of a ſincere upright man, *that he calls always upon God*, whereas the hypocrite will not always do it. Count then yourſelves as much Chriſtians

ſtians as ye find of the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication in you; for theſe that call not on God, their portion is very terrible, God will pour out his wrath upon them, God's face is ſet againſt ſuch as do not pray: And I believe the multitude of this viſible Kirk have this brand upon their face, they call not upon God. God hath taken this character to himſelf *the hearer of prayer*, and theſe who mock at it, their judgment haſteneth, their damnation ſlumbereth not.

SERMON XXII.

1 Pet. iv. 7. *Be ſober, and watch unto prayer.*

WE now come to conſider the coherence and connexion theſe duties have one to another; prayer is the principal part of the Chriſtian's employment, and ſobriety and watchfulneſs are ſubordinate to it, *Be ſober and watch unto prayer.* (1.) Prayer is ſuch a tender thing that there is neceſſity of dieting the ſpirit unto it, that prayer may be in good health; a man muſt keep a diet and be ſober, ſobriety conduces ſo much to its well-being, and inſobriety makes prayer fail: Prayer requeſts a wholeſom Chriſtian at his beſt eſtate. (1.) Becauſe prayer that is well at itſelf muſt have much divine affection in it, that may be the wings of it to riſe upon, the oil that may keep the flame, *James* v. 16. Now inſobriety is the moth of divine affection, the love of this world eats out the love of God and ſpiritual things; as much as the one goes up the other goes down, like the contrary points, 1 *John* ii. 15. Vehement deſires would be a cloud of incenſe to carry the petition up unto heaven; but the love of this world ſcatters it, pours water upon the heart, and makes it neither to conceive heat nor flame:

ſlame: *To be carnally minded is death*, both here and hereafter, *Rom.* viii. 5, 6, 7. It is death to duties, it kills the ſpiritual life of the ſoul. Inſobriety is carnal mindedneſs, and minding of the fleſh; a man hath no more taſte of Jeſus Chriſt than the white of an egg: It quite diſtempers his taſte, and makes that only ſavoury which is like itſelf, and all other things bitter. But (3.) Prayer muſt have hope in it, for how ſhall a man pray, if he hope not to come ſpeed? If he maintain not a lively hope, he will cool in his petitions: Inſobriety is not conſiſtent with *hope to the end*, 1 Pet. i. 17. He that would hope to the end muſt lift up his garments that hang ſide, and take a lick of every thing by the way, he muſt not let them hang down, but gird up his affections with the girdle of truth and ſobriety. We obſerve, (4.) That prayer muſt come out of a pure heart, and God muſt be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth, *John* iv. 23, 24. 2 *Tim.* ii, 22. Inſobriety makes an unclean heart, the luſts of the fleſh, and the love of the world defile the ſpirit, and makes it to ſend forth impure ſtreams. (5.) There cannot be lodging for the Spirit where there is much love to the world; this grieves the Spirit, and makes him depart from us, and ſo a man is beſt to expreſs his own groans, or to have none at all which is worſe. Where the *Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, and the Spirit muſt have a clean houſe; ye muſt touch no unclean thing, if you would have God to receive you into the holy adoption of his children. (6.) Prayer cannot thrive where faith is not in a good condition, for faith purifies the heart which ſends out prayer, 1 *Tim.* i. 5. *Acts* xv. 9. 2 *Tim.* ii. 22. and O but inſobriety makes an ill conſcience; and faith and a good conſcience ſeare ſall in one bottom, both fall and ſtand together: How then can the ſoul look that holy one in the face,

face, whoſe eyes are pure, and cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence? How can it look upon his holineſs, when it hath been going a whoring after the world, and forſaking the fountain of living waters. In a word, the heart that is not dead to this preſent world, will neither pray much nor well; for the heart is otherwiſe taken up, hath not many wants to ſpread before God, nor room for ſpiritual things; the creature gives him no leave to come to God. O but communion with God is a tender thing, and ſubject to many alterations and changes of weather! A little more mirth than is needful, will indiſpoſe us for prayer, a little more ſadneſs than is within bounds will alſo indiſpoſe us for this duty. Carefulneſs and anxiety cannot pray; therefore it concerns all the ſaints to keep their hearts with all keeping, to *keep themſelves unſpotted from the world.* If ye would keep yourſelves in ſpeaking terms with God, ye muſt not entertain the creature too much; any exceſs in your affections will divert the current of them, that they ſhall not run towards God. And next ye ſee a ſolid reaſon why ye are ſo little in prayer, and keep not a praying temper, becauſe ye are too liberal and laviſh of your affections upon the world. Chriſtians, how can ye pray, when your affections are upon the things of the earth; will ye ſeek heavenly things, or care much for communion with God, when a preſent world is ſo much in your eye: Prayer muſt be werſh and and unſavoury when the world is ſweet, and religion turns a compliment, when your hearts are here. Prayer is a ſpecial point of your converſation in heaven, and the love of this world keeps your hearts beneath heaven; your treaſure is here, and your hearts can be no where elſe willingly: Ye muſt then be mortified to the world before ye can pray aright. But we would likewiſe conſider,

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2*dly*, That ſobriety is a great furtherance to watching, and therefore they are uſually joined together, 1 *Pet.* v. 8. 1 *Theſſ.* v. 6---9. This is clear, for if a man be not ſober, but drink too much of the creature's ſweetneſs, or bitterneſs, till he loſe his feet; he cannot watch, and the enemy will make invaſion when he ſleeps: ſobriety is the mother of ſecurity, a ſurfeit of any thing indiſpoſes the body for any action: When the mind goes without the bounds of moderation, and ſtretches its Chriſtian liberty beyond the bounds of edification it cannot hold waking, a *little ſleep and ſlumber* overtakes, *till poverty and deſtruction come like an armed man.* (2.) When a man hath drunk himſelf of the creature and hath his heart engaged to it, he is in an incapacity to diſcern a friend from an enemy; whatever comes in with his predominant or idol, will get fair quarters, tho' it may be, it will betray him: The love of the world when it ſtands centry at a man's heart, will keep out true friends, it will hold out Jeſus Chriſt and ſpiritual things, all that ſeems to come in contrary terms with itſelf, and will let in the enemy that will deſtroy the ſoul. (3.) Inſobriety entangles a man with the ſnares of the world, and ſo he cannot be a good ſoldier of Jeſus. I think the conjunction here is expreſſed more fully, 2 *Tim.* ii. 2, 3, 4. The good ſoldier of Jeſus Chriſt that wars a good warfare, *muſt not intangle himſelf with the affairs of this life*: He muſt be ſober in the uſe of all things, or elſe he cannot be faithful to his Maſter; he will be about his own buſineſs when he ſhould be watching, he will not only labour to pleaſe the Captain of his ſalvation Jeſus, but he has many other things to pleaſe beſides; and if any of his too kind friends, come to ſpeak with him, he will leave his duty and go apart with them, the watchman's office will take him up

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othing beside; but the insober man cannot give imself wholly to it, because his idols cry upon im, he will prefer his pleasures before his credit nd honesty. Therefore, as ye would not expose our souls, and all ye have to the will of temptaen, be sober; the devil hath gotten his will of a an that he can force to ly down with the creature nd ...ep in its bosom: If once Satan can gild up e world in your eyes, and represent it amiable, nd cause high and big apprehensions of it, O ye re in the greatest hazard from the world of being vercome wholly by it; that was the temptation tan sought to prevail with Christ by, but he found othing in him. If the devil have taken thee up to mountain to see the glory of the world, and make ou fancy a pleasant life here-away, take heed of it, r ye will drink drunk, and forget yourselves, and ill not discern between good and evil.

3*dly*, Prayer must be watched unto; we must not nly pray but continue instant in prayer, *Rom.* xii. We must *continue in prayer, and watch in the same ith thanksgiving*, Col. iv. 2. it is a strange expresn, and familiar in scripture, *Eph.* vi. 18. O what a trange word is it! it is either very needless, or else mports the unspeakable necessity of prayer. Prayng always, what needed more? But we must pray *ith all manner of prayer and supplication in the pirit*, and more yet, *watching thereunto*, and to express the superlative degree of the necessity of rayer, he adds *with all perseverance*: Since the ords at the first view do speak infinitely more than e practise, let many a Christian express their own ractice and set it down beside this verse, and blush nd be ashamed; the most part of you behoved to peak thus, I pray sometimes morning and evening, hen I have nothing to do; and is this *praying alays, and watching thereunto with all perseverance?* o *watch unto prayer* we conceive speaks these things,

1*ſt*, To obſerve all opportunities, occaſions an advantages of prayer, to be glad of getting any o caſion to ſit down and pray; it is to ſeek out occ ſions and to be waiting for them: Too many u to excuſe themſelves eaſily that their other employ ments take them up, and they think on this accoun they may omit prayer with a good conſcience, miniſters buſied about their calling, and at the book, think it no omiſſion that they pray not often but alas, is this watching unto prayer! ye ſhoul be as men lying in wait upon ſome good opportu nity to take hold of, prayer would hinder no buſ neſs of that kind, but much further it, prayer woul be the compendious way of it. Ye uſe not to b challenged when ye get not a commodity to pray but do ye ſeek opportunity when it is not offered Do ye look after a retiring place, and withdraw from company, when ye cannot pray with com pany? This were indeed *watching unto prayer* but watching unto prayer will make men ſometime uncivil (ſo to ſpeak, that which it may be would b called uncivility) it will be a very preſſing neceſſit that will draw away the time of prayer, no com pliment would hinder you to go to it; if ye got corner alone, that would invite a man that watche unto prayer, he even ſeeks it when he finds it no offering itſelf: The watcher unto prayer will ſte much of his time from others, and other employ ments, and he will not ſpend time unneceſſarily.

2*dly*, To watch unto prayer is to accept willing ly of all occaſions and opportunities offered; O! ſuch a man find a corner, but it will be ſeaſonabl and ſweet unto him: If he have nothing to do, an knows not how to paſs his time, then he conceive he is called to prayer, and to keep communion wit God; but how many opportunities have ye, an what advantage make ye of them? Ye have tim and place convenient, all the day or much of i

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d yet ye content yourſelves with an ordinary ſet et; ſure this is not watching. Watching unto rayer would make all emergent occaſions wel- ome, ye would not have any impulſe of the Spirit nd motion to pray, but would ye follow it, and be d by the Spirit to your duty: Ye would not hear of ny rare paſſage of providence, or any of God's iſpenſations towards yourſelves, and other ſaints, ut you would think it a good call to pray and nake the right uſe and improvement of it.

3*dly*. To watch unto prayer, is to obſerve all the mpediments of prayer, all the enemies of that pre- ious thing prayer, that ye ought to keep as the pple of your eye; whatever ye find by experience rejudicial unto prayer mark that, what indiſpoſes the pirit and makes it carnal mark that, what fills you with confuſion and aſtoniſhment, and what hinders he liberty of your delighting in God, and rejoicing n his promiſes, mark that, and ſet yourſelves againſt heſe: O but many Chriſtians find liberal diſcourſ- ng, and much mirth, prejudicial to the Spirit's emper, and yet who watches againſt it?

4*thly*, Watch over your hearts that ye may keep praying temper, and be ſtill in ſpeaking terms with God: And if ye would ſtill keep a praying temper, (1.) Be frequent and often in the meditation of God; keep yourſelves in his preſence, as before him, that ye may walk under the ſight of his eye, Pſal. cxix. 168. Pſal. cxxxix. 1----7. Stealing out of God's ſight makes the heart bold to ſin, the tem- per of the heart is but like the heat of iron, that keeps not when it is out of the fire, or like the melting of wax: If ye be out of God's ſight your hearts will cloſe. But (2.) Let no object come thro' your mind without examination of it; let not your heart be a high-way for all. If a good motion enter, entertain it, and let it not die out: Give it up to God, that he may cheriſh it. (3.) Repel not any

motion of the Spirit, but entertain it. There ar three things ye would watch over, as (1.) Your ſelves, your own hearts, Prov. iv. 23, &c. ye mu keep your heart and it keeps all. (2.) Watch ove your duty, Luke viii. 8. (3.) The time of Chriſt coming, his ſecond coming to judgment, *Matt* xxiv. 42. *Mark* xiii. 31. So did *David wait an watch till the Lord ſhould return*, Pſal. cxxx. 5, So did *Job wait all the days of his appointed tim till his change came*. Now Chriſtians, where are ye Is not your practice your ſhame? It is one amon a thouſand profeſſors, that can be noted for muc praying, who among you can get this commenda tion that the holy Ghoſt gives to *Anna*, *She ſerve God with faſting and prayer night and day*? You morning and evening are the limits of your duty and it is almoſt an hereſy to go beyond that. I there any tender well-doing Chriſtian in ſcripture but he prayed much? This made *David* ſo exem plary, and hath not Jeſus Chriſt *gone before you* Heb. v. 7. *to lead the way*? O but Chriſt's praying ſo often in the days of his fleſh, and *making ſupplic cation with ſtrong cries*, is a crying witneſs againſt the ſloth of Chriſtians in this generation; both people and paſtor, how ſhould ye be aſhamed? Hath Jeſus prayed ſo long and often, and ſhould not the poor followers, indigent beggars be all in ſupplication? The Chriſtian ſhould name himſelf as *David* did, *I gave myſelf to prayer*. Many a man ſits down to his employment and prays not much, becauſe he hath gifts and abilities; but ſo did not Chriſt, who was able to ſave, yet he prayed and went about the Father's work with dependence upon him: And O that miniſters would ſeek all from heaven immedi ately, and people ſeek it from heaven alſo. Think ye that the Spirit will take twice a day for *praying always*, and ſet times for watching thereunto? No, no, we think there is little of this practiſed in this generation.

Now

Now we come to the reaſon that is added in the text, *the end of all things is at hand*, that is, the day of the Lord is at hand; Chriſt Jeſus who was once here offered for ſins, ſhall again *appear without ſin, unto ſalvation, unto them who look* and wait for his appearance; and he ſhall put an end to all theſe things, either to themſelves, by conſuming them, or to the uſe of them: All that ye now doat upon is periſhing, and it is not far hence, that ye ſhall ſee the world in a flame, and all that ye ſpend your ſpirits on; and Jeſus Chriſt ſhall bring ſalvation to his own ſaints, therefore *be ſober and watch.* But how is it that the end is ſaid to be at hand? Are not many generations paſſed ſince this word was ſpoken, it is almoſt two thouſand years ſince, and yet *Peter* ſpake of it, and Chriſt ſpake of this day as at hand, ſure it muſt be nearer us now than it was then, *the day of the Lord is at hand?* (1.) Becauſe if we would count years as God doth, we would call the world but of one week's ſtanding, for God counts *a thouſand years as but one day*, 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9. the world thinks he is *ſlack concerning his promiſe*, and aſks, *Where is the promiſe of his coming?* But believers think not ye ſo, reckon years according to the duration of the Antient of days, and by faith ſee the Lord's day at your hand, as it were to-morrow ſtill. But (2.) It is not without ſpecial reaſon that the new Teſtament ſpeaks of all the time from Chriſt's coming to the end, as the laſt time, as it were but one age or generation immediately preceeding the great day, as if the day of judgment were to be, or this generation of the earth would paſs. It is of great uſe to us becauſe the Lord would have believers in the laſt age of the world come to ſome great pitch of mortification and deadneſs to the world, and hope of immortality, than has been come to before, he would have them as men waiting for the Bridegroom, and this their exerciſe, every one in this generation

ſtand-

ſtanding with their loins girded, and their ſhoes put on ready for the journey, and their lamps in their hand, *Luke* xii. 37. *Mark* xiii. *Mat.* xxv. He would have all walking as if the day of judgment were to-morrow, as if the King of ſaints were now entering into the city, and all believers ſhould go out to meet him as their King bringing ſalvation.

This then is the poſture of the world, all things are near run, *the faſhion of this world paſſes away*, 1 Cor. vii. 29. and the ſame exhortation is here preſſed; this then I ſay, is the ſtate all things ye ſee are in, it is their old age. The creation now is an old rotten houſe that is all dropping through and leaning to the one ſide: The creature is now ſubject to vanity and groaning, *Rom.* viii. 21, 22. The day is not far hence, that this habitable world muſt be conſumed; and O! but many a man's god and idol will then be burnt to aſhes, 2 *Pet.* iii. 10, 11, 12. *the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe*, &c. God hath ſuffered men to live long in this world, that they might come to repentance, and he hath kept it ſo long for the elect's ſake, if had not been for them, the world ſhould not be unburied till ſix hours at night; but when he hath gathered in all the election, then ſhall an end be put to all the adminiſtrations of kingdoms, all governments, all nations: Think ye that God had ſo much reſpect to the world, or to the kings of it? No, he would put an end to all the kingdoms of the world, and never let them make their teſtament, if the elect were completed; if Chriſt were compleated, there would be no marrying or giving in marriage, no more food and raiment, no more laws and government, all your fair lands and buildings muſt go to the fire. Now aſk the queſtion that *Peter* aſks, *Seeing all things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of converſation ought ye to have?* And here it is anſwered, *be ſober, and watch unto prayer*: Aſk at *Paul* and he will tell you, 1 Cor. vii.

29,

29, 30, 31. *The time is ſhort*, what remains then, *but that he that marries be as they who marry not, they that weep as they that wept not*, &c. So then here is the duty of theſe who look for Chriſt's ſecond coming: Chriſt hath left it with you till he come again, and put an end to all things, *be ye ſober and vigilant*. But (2.) Conſider what ſtrength this reaſon hath to enforce this exerciſe, and how ſuitable this duty is to them who look for Chriſt's ſecond coming. (1.) In relation to ſobriety it hath a twofold force, for (1.) It is all the abſurdity of the world, that ye ſhould ſo eagerly purſue periſhing vanities; that ye ſhould fall in love with the old decrepit world that is groaning under vanity, and very near conſumption: The day is coming that the ſoul ſhall ſee all theſe things deſtroyed to aſhes, and what will it then think of this idol? This is the thing I loſt my ſoul for, and it is gone; and O! how tormenting a thing will it be to the conſcience? How have I been put by heaven for a thing of nought, for a vanity? Be ſober, for the world cannot be a portion to an immortal ſpirit; your ſpirit is immortal and will continue after theſe things are gone, and it will outlive this world, your goods and good name, your pleaſures and profits, your lands and rents, all will have an end, and your ſpirit ſhall continue after them. Why then will ye chooſe that for your portion, that will take wings and flee from you, or you will leave it, when ye ſee all burnt up, where then will your god and your portion be? (2.) Chriſtian believers ye have another portion; for Chriſt who comes to put an end to theſe things, ſhall appear in glory, and ye ſhall appear with him in glory. He ſhall come with ſalvation to you, *Heb.* ix. 28. *Col.* 3. 4. Your life ſhall appear with him, your inheritance is above; that ſweet Saviour, that came unto this world for ſaving loſt ſinners, ſhall come again, and will not think himſelf complete without you, and till he have all his members at his right hand. And therefore ſaints be ſober, while ye are in this world, ye need not any other thing in the interim, but the hope of eternal life, to keep your hearts, and hold them up. O but ye will think yourſelves well come to, ere it be long, ye may laugh at the poor, blind, demented worldlings, who are ſtanding in ſlippery places, and like

children

children catching a ſhadow, or labouring to comprehend the wind in their fiſts. They are but dreaming that they eat and drink, and behold when the great day of awakening comes at the reſurrection, they find their ſouls empty, tho' while they lived they bleſſed their own ſouls, and men bleſſed them alſo. Your inheritance is above, and what need ye more that have ſuch a hope? May ye not *puriſy yourſelves as he is pure*, and purge your hearts from all corruptions, and uſe this world as ſtrangers in your paſſage through it, that owns nothing as their own? Ye have no propriety here, and therefore ye may the better live as ſtrangers. But (2.) In relation to watching, Chriſt Jeſus is coming, and is near, therefore watch. This Chriſt himſelf preſſes earneſtly, *Be as men that wait for the coming of the Lord*, ſince he is not far off; therefore Chriſtians ye ought to be upon your feet, and not ſit down with the creature, ye ſhould entertain this hope of his coming and comfort yourſelves by it, and be kept at your duty by it. I may ſay, there is nothing that is leſs known among Chriſtians, Chriſt and his apoſtles often preſſed it; as it ſeems he would have it the one ever running duty, through all generations: Ye ought then to be ready for Chriſt's coming, and not be found ſleeping. (3.) In relation to prayer, for *if the end of all things is at hand*, and Chriſt will ſoon come again, then the Spirit's exerciſe, and the bride's ſhould be, *Come Lord Jeſus, come quickly*. Pray Chriſt back again, and ſay, *Why tarries his chariot wheels?* Pray him back with ſalvation, and haſten his return by prayer; he hath left ſuch a dependent condition, left ſuch an employment for us, as ſpeaks dependence and neceſſity: This is the time of promiſes and we ought to pray for their accompliſhment. In heaven there will be no prayer, for prayer ſhall be ſwallowed up in praiſe; faith in viſion, and hope in poſſeſſion: But prayer is a duty ſuitable to the time, and to the Chriſtian's minority, to his baniſhment and ſojourning. Dream not of an eternity here-away; learn *wiſdom to number your days, and apply your hearts to* religious *wiſdom*; and if ye die thus, ye may rejoice that ſo many of the number are paſſed, and cannot return again.

FINIS.